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*Dorner's System of Christian Doctrine.*

VOL. I.

*NEW AND REVISED EDITION.*



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A SYSTEM  
OF  
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

BY  
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TRANSLATED BY  
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VOL. I.  
*TRANSLATED BY ALFRED CAVE, B.A.*



*Second and Revised Edition.*

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE next best thing, it has been said, to writing a good book, is to translate one. Whatever be the merits of the translation, the original of this work is assuredly a good book. Its author is already favourably known to the English-speaking nations by previous translations in the *Foreign Theological Library*. The stupendous work upon *The Person of Christ* has now become in Great Britain and America, what it had been in Germany from its publication, a classic in Christology. The equally valuable *History of Protestant Theology*, so full of mature wisdom, keen criticism, wide sympathy, liberal thought, and evangelical power, contains one of the most philosophical and lucid statements in the English tongue of the origin and aims of Lutheranism, whilst by its history of religious thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it affords at once one of the best guides to the modern German schools, and one of the clearest and most prophetic exponents of that regeneration of Theology now in such rapid progress. Still, large as are the merits of Dr. Dorner's previous labours, the *System of Christian Doctrine*, to judge from the twelve hundred pages already issued, is distinctly his masterpiece, the ripe fruit of a long and thoughtful life.

In Theology, as in every other branch of thought and practice, there are pioneers and colonists, inventors and *col-laborateurs*, those who plant and those who water. Hence the history of Theology is the narrative of new impulses given, corrected, and exhausted. If Böhringer can present a faithful

and suggestive picture of the History of the Christian Church in biographies, a similar method might be advantageously employed, at least once in a way, for the History of Christian Doctrine. What better summary, for example, could be framed of the Patristic Age than a scientific and genetic treatment of Irenæus and the *Contra Hæreses*, Origen and the *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, Athanasius and the *Contra Arianos*, and Augustine and the *De Libero Arbitrio*? The story of Anselm's life and influence would afford a history of Scholasticism. More truly than Louis le Grand was L'État, Melancthon was the Lutheran, and Calvin the Reformed Church of the seventeenth century. We now have papal authority for saying that Aquinas is Roman Catholicism. So, too, no inappropriate title for a history of modern German divinity would be, "The Influence of Schleiermacher historically and critically considered." Of the school of Schleiermacher, if such a phrase may be used, Dr. Dorner is, in the sphere of doctrine, assuredly the most distinguished exponent.

When Schleiermacher published his *Christliche Glaube*, Rationalism had long been engaged in its fell work. No widespread religious movement like that associated with the names of Whitfield and Wesley had revived at the seats of learning, as well as in the cottages of the poor, the fresh and warm, if youthful and untutored, vigour and enthusiasm of the Apostolic Age. Germany was suffering from the onesidedness which necessarily characterizes times of religious decadence. Let faith be living, and Christianity is regarded as a new vital principle affecting the whole man,—mind and heart and will; let faith be languid, and Christianity is viewed as natural life at a higher power, affecting, according to the preponderant mental tendency, mind *or* heart *or* will. Where the Christian is not, the formalist is, and the ritualistic Pharisee is always accompanied by the rationalistic Sadducee and the mystical Essene. Just as in our days we have become very familiar in England, in the decay of a religion of a New Testament type, with a

Broad Church party with its tendency to preach salvation by thought, and a High Church party with its tendency to preach salvation by works, and a Low Church party with its tendency to preach salvation by feeling, so was it in Germany at the commencement of this century. With the more speculative character of the borderers on the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe, the inevitable results of the relapse from a really evangelical religion showed themselves proportionably modified in what was called the Orthodox School, in Rationalism and in Mysticism. The first thought of consequences without consistency; the second of consistency without consequences; and the third, in its self-engrossment, thought of neither consequences nor consistency. And the necessary sequel was soon seen. An assertion of principles which was merely speculative with the thinkers, with the masses became practical. The popular adherent of Orthodoxy (so called) was narrow; the popular Rationalist was immoral; and the popular Mystic was sentimental. That things have changed somewhat is largely due to Schleiermacher. His was a comprehensive mind. As Dorner has said in another work, "The Moravian Brotherhood was his mother, Greece was his nurse." He thrived equally well upon the Dialogues of Plato and the hymns of Zinzendorf, upon the *Monadologie* of Leibnitz and Spener's *Faith which makes Blessed*. That his intellectual faculties had no inadequate development, let his voluminous literary remains and the large collection of his published letters, written to such men as the Schlegels, Marheineke, von Humboldt, and de Wette, testify; and that at the same time he was rich in the intuitive perception, the quick sympathy, the fine sensitiveness, which are the features of the opposite pole to the intellectual, his public and private writings also bear witness. His very face was a beautiful and significant study,—the Roman nose, rather thin and long, with a delicate fulness at the lobes,—the eyes, partly closed by the dropped eyelids, keen, quiet, calm, and penetrative,—the mouth firm

set, yet irritable, its thin lips fringed with exquisite lines,—the brow rising for a while straight from the nose, clear, not too broad, and never bulging,—the head long, loftiest above the vertebræ of the neck, neither erect nor drooping, but steady,—every feature, in short, contributing to the impression of a many-sided man. He had the influential combination of the manly and what we are apt to call the womanly; and if in one of his letters to his beloved sister Charlotte he half complains that “there is much in him which men seldom understand, and which only finds its full satisfaction in the society of women,” he at least gives us a clue to his mental endowment. Add to these natural qualifications, sedulously and carefully cultured, the further fact of a deep, rich, and intimate religious experience, first gained from the fraternity of Neuwied, then matured by suffering, sympathy, and toil, and we have a man capable of profound usefulness in the regeneration of his age. And very splendid has been the lustre of his fame; his day has set neither in clouds nor storms. Schleiermacher's great contribution to his time was the prominence, at once vital and vitalizing, which he gave to *faith*, or as we may say with somewhat more definiteness, to that consciousness which is a lifelong and conscious communion with God in Christ. To Schleiermacher the Christian life was a new life, the organic product of a superadded and divine principle, which, like natural life, had its own laws, characteristics, and stages of growth; and to him, too, we may parenthetically add, the one law of Christian culture was, what wise men have recognised as the one law of natural culture,—an equal and rounded development on all sides. This view of faith, the expression of his own spiritual experience, gave him a large leverage in dealing with the fallacies current around him. It was easy to confute the Rationalists by showing that faith is not the natural intellect applied to Christian truth, but a divine gift; it was easy to neutralise the error of the so-called Orthodox party by declaring that faith is not belief in a human creed, but parti-

icipation in a divine life ; he met the Mystic by demonstrating that faith was more than feeling, since, having originated in a new vital principle, it wrought results which must be studied, and had a development which must not be stunted. Indeed, it is an inaccuracy to speak of the School of Schleiermacher. He did not found a School, he gave an impulse. What Ueberweg says of him as a philosopher is equally applicable to him as a theologian : " Schleiermacher neither founded a School in the strict sense of the word, nor wished to found one ; he wished to rouse and waken individuality everywhere ; his treatises and writings are as fitted, by their wealth of ingenious and acute thoughts, to quicken and bear fruit on all sides, as they are unfitted, by the absence of a complete systematic form and a strict terminology (designedly avoided by him), to form the rallying-point of a School." Dr. Frank of Vienna goes so far as to maintain that Schleiermacher introduced the word Individuality (*Eigenthümlichkeit*) into the German tongue. And the impulse imparted has been very powerful. There has not been a branch of theological study which has not received a quickening. The interpretation of the New Testament has become more acute, penetrating, and fearless ; Historical Theology has entered upon a scientific phase, eschewing the apologetic standpoint ; even the practical aspects of the Christian life have been systematized ; whilst, as to the study of doctrine, it has been at once revived, corrected, and fertilized, and men like Nitzsch, Julius Müller, Rothe, Tholuck, Hagenbach, Martensen, von Hofmann, Auberlen, Ebrard, Köstlin, Gess, and Frank, are explicit expositors of Schleiermacher's spirit, if not of his doctrines. Amongst living Systematic Theologians there is none more largely indebted to Schleiermacher than Dorner, none who expresses his obligations in a more open yet discriminating manner. Nor is it too much to say that the impulse initiated by Schleiermacher has never before received so intelligent, so loving, so logical, and so judicious a prosecution as is exhibited by this *System*

of *Christian Doctrine*. Schleiermacher has sometimes been likened to Kant; it would be truer to say that Schleiermacher is the Hume, and *Dorner* the Kant of recent German Theology.

Let it be stated at once, however, that the style of this book is not literary. That nameless charm, that intangible blending of the ornate and useful, which elevates didactic prose to the region of high art, is only conspicuous by its absence. Dr. Dorner's prose is not artistic. Self-portraiture there undoubtedly is, as in all prose-writing; but it is a portraiture of weight without equilibrium, of power without polish, of acumen without simplicity, of profundity without buoyancy. Thought is all with our author, and style nothing. Even grammatical laws are held in but slight esteem. One wonders sometimes whether it ever occurred to Dr. Dorner that it was necessary to make himself intelligible. It frequently requires very hard thinking indeed on the part of his translator to fathom what he intends; and his interpreter must be ever alert, ceaselessly sympathetic, and always careful. A little irrepressible reverence is no disadvantage. Besides this tendency to vagueness, Dr. Dorner has little sense of an accuracy born of compression; he is seldom content to suggest; the *limæ labor* does not play a large part in his method of composition. Enclitics, for example, are repeated beyond the verge of wearying, and there is scarcely a sentence which has not its *auch* or its *nur*, its *schon* or its *bloss*. Like von Hofmann, too, he indulges in a vicious use of prepositions, and an *er*, *sie*, or *es* may be not unfrequently found referring to a noun a page back, to be selected from half a score of others by some subtilty of German gender. Further, what can be said of the style of a writer who pushes the licence accorded by the usage of his countrymen in the composition of words to such extremes,—to say nothing of *Insichsein* or *Fürsichsein* or *Stehenbleibenwollen*,—as *Sichnichtsogeseztzhaben* or *Sichgeltendmachen des Ausgeschlossenen*, or who occasionally frames a

word of this kind, *der-aussen-sich-oder-in-einem-andern-sein*, and who does not shrink from penning such a sentence as *Sein Aussichselbstsein kraft des Durchsichselbstsein mit dem Fürsichselbstsein sich zusammenschliesst* (a literal translation of which would be: "By means of His Inseity the Extraseity of God coalesces with His Aseity")? Hegel is more easy to read, and Kant not more difficult. And this rude writing is the more to be regretted because it proceeds manifestly from inattention, not inability. Here and there, in the midst of sober doctrinal exposition, when the fount of feeling is touched, very conspicuous instances occur of the thoughts that breathe in words that burn. Occasionally, too, there is a brilliant aphorism or a startling antithesis. Dr. Dorner even evinces some of Alexander's faculty of cutting a knot. Usually, it is true, he saws a sophism, but he can at times apply a keen blade which divides by one steady and skilful stroke. Nevertheless, with all its faults, the book is a great one; and if labour is always cheerfully given where the reward is adequate, who will refuse a little use of the pick in such a mine as this, where diamonds frequently sparkle, and where from every page rough ore may be dug which will yield solid gold with a little crushing and washing?

It is hoped that the translation will not be quite so repulsive as the original. One great aim has been kept in view—to be as literal as clearness would allow. But in faithfulness to the thought, faithfulness to its envelope has sometimes had to give way. Some harmless devices have been resorted to in order to clarify the expression. In many cases a valueless conjunction or adverb has been omitted; sentences have frequently been broken up; free use has been made of the transposition of words, and the English order has of course been followed in preference to the German; changes have been made in punctuation, and the substitution of semicolons sometimes for commas, and full stops for semicolons, together with the occasional introduction of brackets, italics, and dashes, have,

it is believed, very largely facilitated comprehension ; so, too, every page will show numerous instances in which perplexing pronouns have been replaced by the nouns for which they stand, again to the manifest simplifying of perusal. It cannot, of course, be pretended that error has not crept in here and there in these interpretative renderings ; but such errors, if they exist, will be most readily condoned by those who have the closest familiarity with the original. Upon the rendering of technical terms minute attention has been bestowed. Some of the equivalents adopted are given at the end of this Preface ; others are pointed out upon their first or their most prominent appearance by the insertion of the German word in brackets ; and others yet again, which seemed to call for more detailed notice, have been annotated by footnotes. When a word is used technically, and similarity of rendering seemed important, an attempt has been made at an invariable translation, although an un-English appearance has sometimes resulted. Where words are used frequently, but identity of rendering did not seem indispensable, a method of averages has been occasionally adopted, whereby, various synonyms being used in adjacent sentences, erroneous associations have been counterbalanced, and the exact meaning suggested by the semi-unconscious adjustment mentally made. All references to Scripture have been verified, and in a large number of cases corrected. In short, it is trusted that even facile readers of theological German may find this edition somewhat more easy to read, and not less reliable, than the Berlin edition.

One fact stands out in this *System*: Dr. Dorner writes with a keen appreciation of history. He writes as the conscious successor of a long line of thinkers upon some of the gravest questions which can agitate the mind. Not only is his thought moulded by the recent course of Philosophy and Theology, but even words and phrases, sometimes with a meaning slightly altered, may be traced to the influence of such men as Fichte, Schelling, and even Schopenhauer, to



say nothing of Kant, who has remodelled the whole scientific terminology of Germany. Theology, in our author's esteem, is assuredly no antiquarian study. What the preacher is to the populace, the theologian is, he evidently thinks, to the preacher,—a man who addresses himself to present needs, and who is so eminently affected by the struggles of his own time, that he only investigates the doctrines of the past in the hope of shaping the views of the present. Possibly this sense of immediate needs carries our author too far, and abstract truth is apt to be disregarded in engrossment with evanescent theories. But at any rate this whole work,—and it is one of its greatest recommendations,—is written with a vivid historic sense. The writer consciously occupies a definite position in time; he thinks for the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The labours of all predecessors have therefore been read, marked, learned, digested, and assimilated, thus affording a nutritious and sustaining pabulum for the robust inquirer. Seeing that it is necessary as well as inevitable that controversies which once fiercely raged should be critically estimated by posterity in cooler blood, and that once potent theories which won their triumphant sway by their association with great names should be weighed dispassionately outside the pale of personal and epochal influence, surely a parallel necessity in that invaluable process of the elimination of the worthless and the emphasizing of the worthy must ever be—the possession of intellect as well as the passage of time, the solvent of historical and critical genius as well as the depreciation of the *Zeitgeist*. That being so, a better and more practised manipulator could scarcely be found than Dr. Dorner. He has the piercing eye of the trained expert for the germs of truth in theories and thinkers. With rare and unbiassed acumen he is able to present results and adjudicate upon errors. Indeed, this book might almost be called *A Critical History of Theological Opinion* as well as *A System of Christian Doctrine*. Even the raw student in Theology can scarcely

fail to find here a textbook which he must appreciate a little; and if he will take the trouble to prepare himself for its study by a careful perusal of such a book, say as Bowen's *Modern Philosophy from Descartes to Hartmann* (the best introductory book to German Philosophy known to the present writer), his appreciation must become hearty and high. Perhaps it may be not inappropriately mentioned in this connection, that one of the valuable features in this System is its large-minded contribution to that latest birth of modern historical research—the Comparative Study of Religions.

There are two qualities which determine the immortality of instructive books. They may be cherished for their entire or their occasional teaching. The disjointed thoughts of a Pascal scribbled upon any stray piece of paper, and only to be arranged in an unsatisfactory order by diligent and loving editors, are, nevertheless, the ground of an undying reputation. Or, to take an example from another domain, many a man who has never handled a rod takes delight in good old Izaak Walton because of the quaint and inimitable interpolations of "the contemplative man." On the other hand, it is the System which attracts to such books as Spinoza's *Ethics*, Descartes' *Discours*, the *Summa* of Albertus Magnus, and the *Loci Theologici* of Gerhard. Regarded in either light, disjointedly or systematically, this work is important.

Passing by the definition of Systematic Theology (or as our author not unintelligibly prefers to call it, *Thetic* Theology), a definition which is admirable, and which settles with ease the diverse claims of those two aspirants to the highest seat, viz. Historical and Biblical Theology, we come to the catholic and penetrating investigation into what is called *the Genesis of Faith*. It is one of the peculiarities of Dr. Dorner's treatment that he prefaces the consideration of both Dogmatics and Ethics by what he designates *Pisteology*, or a Doctrine of Faith. Different opinions may be entertained upon the advisability of that treatment, but there will be little variance upon the

extreme value of the analysis of faith here contributed. It is true that there seems to be some swerving from the abstract and scientific presentation of the phases and nature of faith as it is found at all times and in all places, and that this genesis of faith is rather such a genesis as would be found to-day in the mind of a cultivated son of German soil who had passed through night to light; nevertheless, this very narrowing of view has its advantages, seeing that we are enabled to perceive the logical necessity for the man, who has been trained in a pious home and by a parental church, to move on to something higher than a mere second-hand faith, until, after weighing all the philosophical and æsthetic substitutes for real communion with God in the balances and finding them wanting, by his very endeavours to save himself he learns he is a sinner, and that if there is salvation anywhere it must surely be found in Christ. We could ill spare this able, timely, and searching demonstration of the inadequacy of the rest to be found in Ultramontanism, or Pantheism, Science, Practice, or Art. The whole inquiry illustrates anew the truth of Augustine's famous saying, "*Inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat (Domine) in te.*" In fact, this description of the Genesis of Faith is a kind of modern edition of the *Confessions*, in which Ultramontanism, Hegel, and Schleiermacher take the places of Manichæism, Aristotle, and Ambrose.

It is, however, in Theology proper—in the Doctrine of God—that the most lasting laurels will surely be won by Dr. Dorner. Taking exception rightly enough to the loose reasonings by which the Anselmic argument and the arguments from Design and Causation are supposed to substantiate the existence of such a God as is revealed in the Scriptures, and justly animadverting upon the unsatisfactory state of the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes, he has set himself a very surprising task, namely, by a sheer process of reasoning to build up a concatenated proof for the existence of just such a Deity as the Christian worships. The reader must form his

own judgment of this amazing attempt. From the nature of thought in itself the Existence of an Absolute Being is first deduced, and at the same time of an absolute Being that is one, sole, simple, and infinite. By means of the category of causality this absolute Being is then shown to be at once Originator and Originated, the Origin of its own Being, and the Being originated,—in other words, is shown to be absolute Life. Thence the argument proceeds to prove that the absolute Being displays design, harmony, and beauty, and is thus the absolutely *harmonious* Life. And the astonishing course of argument is brought to a close by successively inferring that this absolute Being is absolute Justice, is absolute Good, is Spirit, is a Person, and, lastly, is absolute Intelligence and Wisdom. Whatever opinion be formed of this logically connected and elaborate argumentation, it will be conceded that it is profoundly suggestive and must largely aid in the due subordination and estimation of the well-known Teleological, Cosmological, Ontological, and Moral arguments of previous writers. It need scarcely be said, after Dr. Dorner's well-known predilections, that an excellent statement is given of the history of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

So much for the contents of this volume. In subsequent volumes special attention may be drawn to the sections on Religion, Revelation, Miracles, Inspiration, and the Incarnation, to the whole of the Christology, and to the entire Doctrine of Sin in its Biblical, Historical, and Dogmatic aspects, whilst the Doctrine of the Devil, the Doctrine of Death, and the consideration of the Consequences of the Incarnation will be found worthy of close examination. Doubtless the Second half of the Special Doctrine when it is published will, to judge from Dr. Dorner's occasional statements upon Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology, fully sustain the reputation of the *Fundamentallehre* and the *Specielle Glaubenslehre*, erste Hälfte.

And as a System this work is remarkable. Dr. Dorner's

work is the first consistent application to Dogmatics of the principle of Faith, which was so capable of constructing a doctrinal whole. Schleiermacher saw vividly enough that one of the most powerful weapons in the hand of the Christian apologist was the difference between the Christian and the general consciousness. Natural life at its best could never grow into Christian life without aid from without, and Schleiermacher therefore made the distinction between the first and second births the starting-point of his *Christliche Glaube*. According to him, a position within the great Church Invisible was indispensable to either an exposition or a criticism of Christianity—a postulate which was not without its truth; but he thus made Christian Doctrine an esoteric doctrine accredited by a class but not accreditable by mankind. His System of Christian Doctrine is merely an introspective analysis of the Christian Self-consciousness, and is therefore only true for the pious. Indeed, Schleiermacher overlooked the fact that, although the second birth has a consciousness *sui generis*, it is notwithstanding engrafted upon the offshoot of the first birth. This vicious bias has remained more or less in even the most original followers of the great theologian of Halle. Thus the great necessity from a doctrinal point of view was to state the beliefs of the *sana ratio* of the natural man, to state the beliefs of the Christian man, to co-ordinate these two classes of beliefs, and to present them *as truth* and *as a coherent whole*. This, in brief, is the laudable aim of Dr. Dorner.

A few additional remarks may be premised upon the method of translation. Two points have already been referred to—the rendering of technicalities, and some few liberties which have been taken, it is hoped wisely, with punctuation and some minor details. It is upon the translation of technicalities that a few more words need be said. The common renderings of the Kantian terminology, acclimatized amongst us by Sir William Hamilton, have of course been retained:

*Bewusstseyn*, *Vernunft*, *Verstand*, *das Ich*, are invariably *Consciousness*, *Reason*, *Understanding*, the *Ego*: nor has any attempt been made to interpret into more familiar phrases such frequently recurring words as *Subject* and *Object*, *Welt*, *Geist*, and their derivatives; they are simply translated, though with something of an un-English sound, by *subject*, *object*, *world*, *spirit*. *Erkennen* and its derivatives are rendered by *know*, *cognize*, and *apprehend*, and their derivatives, with a preference for *apprehend*. To avoid the ambiguity which would otherwise arise from the not infrequent use of *content* as a mental state, *das Inhalt* is invariably rendered by the plural form, *the contents*. *Beziehung* is *relation*, or if opposed to *Bezogenheit*, becomes *active relation* as contrasted with *passive*. *Idee* is always *idea*, but *Begriff*, since the Kantian distinction is not retained, is translated by *concept* or *idea*. *Anschaung* is mostly *intuition*, but it sometimes stands for a general mental *view*. For *Vorstellung*, *representation* or *mental representation* is used as the nearest equivalent. *Gewissheit* also is invariably translated by *certainty*, tempting as it was in many cases to insert *certitude*. So, in accordance with usage, and to avoid confusion with the *Doctrine of Faith* (*die Lehre des Glaubens*), *Glaubenslehre*,—that accurate technicality of Schleiermacher's, has been rendered by *Christian Doctrine* simply, instead of the *Doctrine of Christian Faith*, and sometimes by *Dogmatics*; for *Glaubenssystem*, however, *System of Christian Faith* has been retained. Other words, or occasional variations in those above mentioned, are, as has been previously said, accompanied by their German synonyms in brackets or by footnotes. Some curiosities of German phraseology are also inserted in brackets.

Two duties remain. In the first place, it is perhaps necessary to distinctly state that on many points the opinions of the translators by no means coincide with those of Dr. Dorner. In the second place, the translator of this volume would tender his very warm thanks to his coadjutor, the Rev. J. S.

Banks, Theological Professor at Headingley College, under whose auspices the second volume will speedily appear, not only for the large patience he has shown in the mutual arrangement of technical terms, and for his numerous suggestions made during the progress of the translation, but also for his careful and painstaking assistance in the revision of proofs.

ALFRED CAVE.

*September 1880.*





# SYSTEM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### § 1.—*Encyclopædic*<sup>1</sup> *Position of the System of Christian Doctrine.*

THETIC (Systematic) Theology is that part of the entire system of Theology which has to solve the problem presented by Christian faith itself—the exhibition of Christianity *as truth*. It embraces both the Christian Doctrine of God and His acts, or the Doctrines of Faith (Dogmatics), and the Doctrines of Morals (Ethics). But the point of unity from which both Dogmatics and Ethics start as their immediate source of knowledge, is Christian EXPERIENCE or Christian FAITH. The aim, or the problem, is to bring the immediate and matter-of-fact certainty, which faith possesses of its contents, to scientific cognition, or to the consciousness of the internal coherence and the objective verification<sup>2</sup> of those contents.

1. It may be pronounced to be the universal scientific conviction of the present day,—a conviction which has been especially strengthened by the fate of the great philosophic systems,—that all knowledge—and with knowledge every

<sup>1</sup> [*I.e.* the place of Dogmatics in the classification of the theological sciences. The theological *Encyclopædia* is the name given in Germany to a preliminary investigation into the definition and filiation of the several constituent sciences. It has been ably treated in separate works by Noack, Hagenbach, Rosenkranz, Lange, Rübiger, and in a posthumous work of Hofmann's.—Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> [*Begründung*. This technicality, which is perpetually recurring, is a parallel to Kant's *Deduktion* and Mill's *Explanation*. It is a substantiation by reference to a wider generalization, a justification like that of a lawyer who proves his point by subsuming beneath a legal principle. Since the *Begründung* of Christianity is, in Dorner's phrase, equivalent to the *exhibition of Christianity as truth*, *verification* has been adopted as the synonym. The full synonym would be *verification by reference to ultimate principles*. If the reader will sometimes mentally substitute *establish* and its derivatives for *verify* and its derivatives, he will correct any misleading association.—Tr.]

science has to do—presupposes *experience*, external or internal.<sup>1</sup> This conviction is directly opposed to all the professedly *a priori* cognitions of “pure thought;”—even logical and mathematical cognition, however certain it is that there necessarily exists therein a knowledge underivable from experience, does not arise apart from excitation from without. At the same time, the necessary limitation of the opinion is presupposed, according to which that only can be designated knowledge which brings conviction to every reasonable being. This position has its truth if, and so far as, the requisite experience has been attained and elaborated. For truth, of course, exists for all; it is self-communicative; it makes itself accessible like a lover. But all do not requite this love by a love for truth; some are not yet susceptible, and must first become so before truth can become evident to them. He who is still wanting in ripened susceptibility can attain to the knowledge and certainty of truth neither by scientific proof nor by any other method, until he has gained that susceptibility; still less, wish it as he may, can he formulate a scientific verification of truth or of the experience of truth. It rather happens (and hence in Theology especially the earlier method of proof, which regarded itself as universally cogent without further preliminary, must be discarded) that no scientific proof, and its result, scientific conviction, is possible unless the requisite experience has been gained. On the one hand, experience opens the faculty of vision for the theme; on the other hand, it supplies the contents, or the material of cognition or knowledge. This view of the case neither undervalues experience as contrasted with science, as if it were something insignificant and unstable, not originating in science; nor does it regard science as secondary or superfluous. Not the former, because experience (be it external or internal) transplants into that sphere of objective truth (be it ideal or real) which must logically precede knowledge, in order that knowledge may possess and become the contents of experience; indeed, experience is itself also a new reality which arises through the contact of the receptive subject with the object, and may become the material of knowledge. Not the latter, because the spirit is

<sup>1</sup> [In the language of Locke, the experience derived from the Senses and from Reflection.—Tr.]

not satisfied with a bare receptive activity and attitude. It is only appeased and quieted when it has reached the cognition of the internal truth of the thing experienced, and has thus reached the certainty that this cognition may now become the germ of a scientific process or result.

2. That contact which gives birth to experience, whether sensuous or spiritual, straightway produces a state of certainty, albeit of manifold gradations, which we may call *faith*. F. H. Jacobi rightly says, that even our certainty of the world of sense is a kind of faith. Similarly in the realm of Christianity we see faith arise again and again through contact with its spiritual world, which possesses as matter of fact an immediate certainty, or a conviction of greater or less strength. In faith the Christian attains a state of life which, as matter of fact, comprehends in itself a certainty that it belongs to the world of true reality.<sup>1</sup> But although faith already possesses a certainty of its own, is there not also in faith an impulse to become perfectly conscious of itself, both as regards those contents of which it has an immediate certainty, and also as regards that certainty itself and the grounds on which it rests? The Christian needs to become clear on this point—that what he cleaves to in faith is truth, and nothing but truth; he also needs to be clear as to why this is the case; his faith would not be well-founded or sincere if he hesitated to meet and to answer these questions with perfect earnestness. The Christian not only knows on whom he believes (2 Tim. i. 12), he also knows why he believes, being ready to give an answer to every man (1 Pet. iii. 15).<sup>2</sup> As it is a duty of love to give a reason for our faith, it is a duty to ourselves, a duty to our love of truth, to have a good reason, and to know that we have it. Only through a clear consciousness as to the foundation of faith, and of its certainty, as well as of the contents of faith, does that certainty become other than that of nonage, a conviction not merely passively assumed, but truly personal and rightly acquired. If the Christian knows his conviction to be well-founded,—which is quite possible by other means than that of a stringent scientific method,—his certainty of faith has thus become intrinsically

<sup>1</sup> Compare the intrinsically valuable work of Frank, *System der Gewissheit*, i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Frank, p. 43.

solid and secure against assault; indeed, the contents of faith will only become the most precious possession possible, if the conviction concerning them is known to be well-founded. Therefore there is an obligation laid upon Christian, and especially upon consciously evangelical piety, to know why we believe. The endeavour to verify faith and its object is also the initiative for the intellectual process which Theology undertakes and perfects by the aid of the Spirit<sup>1</sup> (*mittelst charismatischer Begabung*). There is, of course, an overrating of intellectual apprehension for its own sake, apart from faith. But there is also an underrating of cognition, which forgets that a theoretic factor is contained in faith itself. It was an error common to the old Supernaturalism and to Rationalism, an error full of serious consequences, the thinking that faith is attained through knowledge, that the speculative reason has to prove the title of faith, and this error Schleiermacher confronted with victorious results. But Schleiermacher has, on the other hand, led many into the opposite extreme by the motto of his *Glaubenslehre*, into an indifference to objective truth and its apprehension. The knowledge, to which a place is still left by the side of faith, is merely the believer's knowledge regarding himself and his condition. Now faith, in the pure Reformation sense of the word, has been again reinstated in its post of honour by Schleiermacher, and Christian experience has been recognised as the indispensable preliminary to all dogmatic statements, many believers hold it perilous, not to say rationalistic, for Theology to try to seek a cognition of principles, an apprehension of the verification of faith, and to produce in this sense scientific proof, without which science cannot exist, but only a more or less popular and unworldly (*ascetische*) discourse; and thus they have allowed a mistrust to prevail towards one of the most important parts of theological inquiry. Thus the individual lacks the conscious and firm inward relation to the objective contents of Christianity extant in the church; there consequently remains for his pious sentiment an exterior objectivity only, the inheritance of a state of subjection, not a living, consciously appropriated and unmistakeable objectivity. Others, on the contrary, stopping rigidly at their pious sentiment, and excluding all

<sup>1</sup> Compare Frank, p. 21.

objective religious knowledge as something either impossible or indifferent, turn their scientific strength simply to the excision of all precise objective contents from religion, which, under the name of a direct presentation of consciousness (*Vorstellung*), they subject to a sceptical decomposition, and thus fall into a rationalistic Subjectivism of sentiment. Whilst they disclaim any knowledge of objective truth, and of the objective basis of faith, any possibility even of an objective verification, there simply remains to them a piety severed from every objective rule, and they are satisfied with religious feelings, which vouchsafe them a certain contentment, but which, since there is no objective apprehension of divine things, are not devoid of chance and arbitrariness. At the same time, it is not considered that there is an unhealthy as well as a healthy pious feeling, between which it is impossible to distinguish, there being no criterion of truth apart from subjectivity, or, what is the same thing, since all statements upon dogmatic matters are only the products of subjective pious emotions, and not of a faith which includes within itself a perception of objective truth, and can become the material of objective scientific apprehension. That would be to ascribe to pious emotions an *Autonomy*, which withdraws them from all criticism and from the control of an objective cognizable criterion.<sup>1</sup> We remain satisfied with caprice, which recognises no higher law than its own wellbeing. Hence it naturally follows that healthy faith desires to advance to the apprehension of objective truth, which, indeed, the Christian only attains by the instrumentality of experience, external and internal; and to gain experience in the right way (and of truth) is a hard thing. Its course is one of gradations, since faith has many steps; not merely from subjective reasons (of growing susceptibility), but also because the objects of faith are manifold and full of gradations.

3. What great advantage may be gained from the apprehension and presentation of the Christian contents known immediately to faith *as religious truth*, and especially from a solution of the problem satisfactory at any rate to the needs of a given time, the joyful enthusiasm may attest, with which the first attempt at a coherent, scientific presentation of Christian doctrine in the *'Apxai* of Origen, and of evangelical

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Martensen, *De autonomia conscientie sui humanae*, 1837, pp. 86, etc.

doctrine in Melancthon's *LocI*, was received by their contemporaries. The knowledge that out of the principles of Christianity or of the Reformation a whole, a complete, coherent theory of the universe could be framed, came as an emancipation to the self-contained Christian consciousness, came as a confirmation of the universal mission of Christianity. The demonstration of the harmonious adjustment and concatenation of the Christian positions gave a wide-reaching satisfaction to the inquiry as to their foundation, and at the same time to the discernment of Christianity as truth, although the time had not yet come for discussing ultimate principles. This problem, to mentally master Christian truth as truth,—that is, to apprehend the same both according to its inner coherence and its foundation,—must be regarded as a standing problem for the church, which has to consciously and experimentally propagate the contents of Christian faith *as truth*. No age can undertake the task for another age; each must perform the work anew for itself, however valuable may be the aid of the past, and however assured the continuity which exists. Every age must again acquire the certainty of truth as truth, if it would have truth; it must also, as a consequence, acquire in ways satisfactory to its own sense of truth. Now, this purpose the ecclesiastical science of Faith and Morals, or *Thetic* (Systematic) *Theology*, endeavours to serve. To no other of the theological disciplines is it open, according to their definition, to undertake this labour. Without further remark, such is clearly the case with *Historic* Theology. Many a historical subject may, it is true, be presented systematically, as, for example, the Pauline or the Augustinian system of doctrine. But for the historian it is quite sufficient that his statement be true to documents, without touching upon the truth or the excellence of the thing stated. Further, an exposition of the products of the history of Christian doctrine, although this may be found in the confessions of the church, or in literature, and in the theological development up to the present time (and although this exposition may also be executed systematically and in logical order), would not be an exposition of Christian truth *as truth*, even supposing that it was Christian truth; it would only contain a statement as to what had been believed or taught, without being able to

answer for the truth of the same as historic science. On the contrary, if the History of the Church or of Doctrines desires to advance to a position of substantial, scientific value, it must borrow the objective standard for that purpose from a science which presents and verifies truth *as truth*. The same may be said of *Exegetical* Theology. Biblical Theology, or the exposition of the doctrinal and ethical contents of Holy Writ, is only the historic counterpart of Dogmatics and Ethics, not their substitute. It is true it is not limited to the exposition of the development of the several stages of revelation, nor to the unity and diversity of the several forms of biblical doctrine which belong to one and the same stage,<sup>1</sup> but has also to expound the element of Christian faith and life ready to its hand, as it is given originally in the apostolic proclamations and in the apostolic community. But the exposition of what is primitive is still mainly the exposition of what the apostolic church has thought, how it has lived, and what witness it has borne, not an exposition of primitive Christianity *as truth*. The purely historic character of Biblical Theology is also to be vindicated,<sup>2</sup> both in order to defend that Theology and the understanding of Scripture against violence, and also in order to preserve to Dogmatics and Ethics their individuality and independence. If Biblical Theology would also pronounce anything of exceptional worth, what has been just said of the History of the Church and of Doctrines also holds true here. Finally, *Practical* Theology, although it may be constantly seeking systematic form, and finding it with increasing ease (whence the name of Systematic Theology does not exclusively suit Dogmatics or Ethics), does not aim at the apprehension of Christianity *as truth*; rather is this apprehension and its verification by means of these two thetic disciplines the preliminary to Practical Theology. The end of its own teaching is to show how the idea of the church, which has been verified by these two sciences, is to be realized out of its incomplete and present form.—If, now, we have been obliged to distinguish precisely between *Thetic* Theology and all other theological disciplines, we in no way deny that the exegetic and historical functions present integral moments for its realization.

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *System d. christl. Lehre*, § 4, 6th edit.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Schmid, *Bibl. Theologie N. T.*, 3d edit. 1864, pp. 8-11.

*Observation.*—Schleiermacher, it is true, in his theological Encyclopædia, inclines towards identifying Dogmatics and Ethics, for which he desires both joint and separate treatment, with *Historical* Theology; but whilst these sciences should exhibit the present consciousness of the Christian church, he would still have them understood as the expression of its own conviction, or of the truth which it regards as certain. It would be therefore incorrect to see in his *Christliche Glaube* only the historical, or to imagine that his conception of Dogmatics and Ethics generally was not the exposition of truth; but, of course, he does not intend to present truth in itself, objective truth, but only the conviction which satisfies the Christian, without troubling himself with the verification of this conviction; his only task is to present the inner coherence of the dictates of faith, and thus to respond to one important criterion of truth. Rothe, moreover, would be entirely misunderstood if it was supposed that Dogmatics (or Ethics) was, in his esteem, only a historical science. Although it is true that what he calls "Dogmatik" is, in his esteem, essentially a historico-critical presentation of the doctrine of the church, still he distinguishes between it and speculative theology, which, existing side by side, he would have answer for the truth of the contents of Christian faith, and thus present what we seek from Dogmatics.

4. Thetic Theology forms, therefore, a special branch of the entire scheme of Theology, namely, that which undertakes to scientifically present *as truth* the Christianity believed to be true,—a task which, as we shall see later, may be attempted in different ways. That the entire contents of Christianity as truth are embraced in Dogmatics and Ethics there is no question, since appeal can be made to nothing which has not, might not justly have, its place in one of these two divisions. So much greater, on the other hand, is the controversy concerning the distinguishing features of each, that some eminent theologians doubt whether they are not so intimately associated that a suitable treatment of the two-sided material is only to be attained in a science which embraces both in a higher unity.

It is Nietzsche<sup>1</sup> especially who recommends the joint treatment of Dogmatics and Ethics,—indeed, who represents that treatment as the most complete form of Systematic Theology possible and needful for all times. Possible, because Christian

<sup>1</sup> *System der christl. Lehre*, 6th edit. pp. 3, 4, § 3.



life remains a unity in which knowledge and action condition each other. And this treatment is necessary, because Ethics has forgotten its dependence on the Doctrines of Faith, and Dogmatics its relation to the Doctrines of Morals, or because the knowledge of the foundation and extent of Christianity has become generally very questionable and vacillating. Yet Nitzsch also is willing to admit the possibility and necessity of a relative contraposition of both sides, and therefore admits their difference and their separate treatment. *Con amore*, he gives prominence to the fact that in history also the united treatment of the two sciences has been the rule, and that only more modern times brought the now common separation (which the precedent of George Calixt made lastingly effective, although not the first instance of separate treatment, since unquestionably Paul von Eitzen, a pupil of Melancthon's, as Pelt has shown, already bestowed a separate treatment upon the doctrinal matter of the Catechism, which of course united doctrine and morals; the Reformed Theology, too, frequently took this separation in hand at an earlier date). Even Julius Müller<sup>1</sup> says: the necessity of a separate treatment is inconceivable. Since Christian doctrine, with all its features, is concerned with one central idea, that of salvation, its presentation as a whole is the first duty, and side by side with that duty another arises to frame that aspect into a special science. From more recent investigations, Nitzsch quotes upon his side the attempt of Theremin to bring about a union by means of the root-idea of the Kingdom of God; he also quotes F. H. C. Schwarz<sup>2</sup> and Carsten (*Lehrbuch der christlichen Religion*). To these Sartorius<sup>3</sup> has joined himself, and most recently of all Laichinger.<sup>4</sup> But for the preferableness of the joint treatment (and the preferable should be selected) history cannot be quoted, since that shows that during the time of the joint treatment Ethics was abbreviated (and this abridgment in turn injuriously affected Christian Doctrine), and that the doctrine of Morals, immediately Ethics was apprehended in its individuality, demanded a separate and independent treatment. It

<sup>1</sup> Herzog's *Real-Encykl.* iii. 489, 1st edit.

<sup>2</sup> *Grundriss d. protest. Dogmatik*, 1816, and *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1832, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Lehre v. d. h. Liebe*, in 3 Abth. 1851, 1855, 1856.

<sup>4</sup> *Die christl. Glaubens- u. Sittenlehre*, 1876.

may be admitted that the method of Nitzsch had a justification in the needs of the age; but it does not therefore follow that the nature of the case required it. All must grant, as J. Müller does, that the Christian religion and humanity, restored to divine communion through redemption, have for their prerequisites acts, which originate in the hidden depths of Deity, enter into the history of man, develop themselves therein, and complete themselves beyond its limits. But in that admission it is already conceded that, in a treatment which unites both, the dogmatic material must at any rate form the foundation and the framework, as is the case in Nitzsch's work. But if this holds good, there is only the choice remaining, to which Fr. Schmid<sup>1</sup> has rightly drawn attention, either to seek a place in Dogmatics, where the whole of Ethics may be interpolated, or to insert relative portions of Ethics in appropriate places in Dogmatics. But by the latter method not only would the continuity of ethical doctrine be interrupted, but even the continuity of Dogmatics, because, granted that out of a single doctrinal position it is possible to derive a corresponding ethical one, nevertheless the succeeding doctrinal position cannot possibly be appended to the latter with any safety, needful as it is that it should seek its natural derivation from previously verified positions. Such an alternation between Doctrine and Morals must therefore inevitably become dangerous to the unity of the System. Of course, if it was only required of both sciences, of Faith and Morals,—in the one case to present the development of revelation, in the other that of human morality,—such an alternation might have its place. For the divine act continually presupposes for its progress a ripened susceptibility, which implies a moral activity on the part of man; and conversely, when the ethical development reaches a head, it becomes a provocative for a new divine manifestation, and so on to completion. But neither Dogmatics nor Ethics is confined to presenting the history of revelation and the moral growth of man from the standpoint of development; rather, since Christianity claims to be the perfection of revelation, Christian Doctrine has to unfold religious truth from this point of vantage as a secure possession according to its wealth, and Ethics has to

<sup>1</sup> *Christl. Sittenlehre*, p. 8.

describe how the Christian world of the morally good is built up, and presented in individuals and in communities, upon the foundation of that which has been gained through the completed revelation in Christ, by the instrumentality of human self-determination. This means, that all Christian good, every single virtue, already presupposes the whole course of divine revelation as extant, that is to say, that for the origination of Christian piety, or of the virtues of faith, all the single doctrines of faith, even to Eschatology, have already co-operated. Thus the whole of Ethics, as well as its several parts, will find its appropriate place, not within Dogmatics, but at its end; which statement simply signifies that the Doctrines of Faith must be blended into a separate whole, to which the Christian Doctrine of Morals may likewise be appended as a separate whole, this whole becoming an individual structure, since it describes how a Christian moral world shapes itself on the foundation of the divine acts appropriated by self-determination.

But Christian Doctrine has not merely to do with the divine acts in redemption and restoration, but also with the knowledge of God in Himself and according to His essence. It is not possible that that only should be of value to the pious man which God does for him and for humanity, especially as regards salvation. These acts already point back to the divine Essence, which is actually revealed in them, and does not remain a mere mystery. If it is said, His acts point back to His will, to His disposition, but with the knowledge of His disposition there is no knowledge given of His essence, the supposed independent relation between the Divine disposition and essence must make the former precarious, and leave room for thoughts of mutability, because it would not be the heart of God which revealed itself in the acts, but something still higher would be presupposed (for example, a *Supremum arbitrium*), by means of which His disposition of love, in its duration and stability, and His acts in their eternal importance and validity, would be put in question. Further, the opposite view, which excludes all knowledge of God Himself, might possibly leave room for gratitude for the divine favours, but not for the glory and praise of God.

The relation between Dogmatics and Ethics we therefore define in this way, that the former has for its subject God and

His acts, and the latter that world of human morality which is brought about by the acts of human self-determination. The objection to the separate treatment of the two sciences, that the Doctrines of the *New Birth, of Sanctification, and of the Church* are ethical doctrines, which nevertheless cannot be withdrawn from Christian Doctrine without mutilating that doctrine, is removed by the following consideration. If Christian Doctrine rightly present the unquestionably divine acts of justification and sanctification, as it behoves it to do, it shows as the aim of the divine act or impulse a human state of mind, namely peace and joy, and by means of this the evoking of a moral activity in man; it therefore shows that the quality of the divine activity is to engender activity. Just as in nature the creative activity of God goes forth to give birth not to something dead or passive, but living and self-supporting, whilst the creative activity passes over into the self-supporting creature, and has no existence without the co-operation of the thing created, the same thing is also repeated in the higher stage. But it is not fitting for Dogmatics to prosecute the inquiry into this self-determination of personality, its contents and its laws,—that inquiry it resigns to Ethics,—just as in reference to the first creation it by no means communicates a complete Cosmology or history of nature, but is satisfied with presenting the divine creative act according to its fundamental significance for that wider science. Quite similar is the relation to the Doctrine of the Church. The Church is not merely a work of man's, but a divine thought and a divine deed; the relative doctrine has therefore a rightful place in Christian Doctrine. But the ecclesiastical community is none the less a work of faith also and love, which displays itself most clearly in its constant reproduction. This side of the investigation falls to the share of Ethics. Finally, as far as Christology is concerned, that union of the divine and human, of which Christ is the principle, is the fundamental idea in Christianity; that union must therefore be presented both in Dogmatics and Ethics, although in each case in accordance with the main standpoints,—in the one case the divine, in the other the human.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is an answer to Lange's objection to the separation of Dogmatics and Ethics (*Encyclop.* 1877, p. 178): "Where, then, in this Ethics will Christ find

5. Although we are now justified in treating Dogmatics and Ethics as two separate sciences, still they need not be separated to such an extent that *the connection of their subjects* is forgotten. That is already precluded, on the one hand, by the fact that the existence of the moral is conditioned by and dependent upon the divine act. Conversely, also, Christian Doctrine is similarly conditioned by and dependent upon the moral principle; since the activity of God, as well as His essence, is only rightly recognised, if it is recognised in its aim of evoking and perfecting an ethical world. But each science is guaranteed and forearmed against gross aberrations, either on the doctrinal or ethical side, if each keeps clearly in view *the identity of origin*. For although it is impossible to approve, when Nitzsch, in search of the supposedly most complete form, will not allow Dogmatics and Ethics to grow into relatively independent structures, but rather desires to hold fast to them in their unity, it is nevertheless unmistakeable that the very duality itself of these disciplines requires the exhibition of that unity, out of which both were born, and which thus is and remains the common starting-point. This unity consists in that *Faith* which determines the Christian character of personality, in which the divine and the normally human are united. Precisely for that reason it is scientifically required to fix, in the first place, with some accuracy, this common source and starting-point, in order to subsequently discover the point where they divide into separate streams. The separation of the two would not be possible were Dogmatics regarded as "theoretic" Theology; because Ethics is also theoretic: nor are the two distinguished as knowledge and practice; in both the cognitive faculty is supreme as the faculty of the one Christian personality, or of the spirit enlightened by Christianity. Their difference must be sought in their objects or in their contents. Nor, again, would that distinction be reached, if, starting from faith, the mere description of the unity of the Christian life, or of the believing

a place? If He is placed beside God, the system becomes Monophysitic; if by the side of man, Nestorian or Ebionite." The reply is found in Lange's own statement: "The Christologic nerve, the nerve of the divine-human, permeates the whole system of Faith." It would only be necessary to add, "and the whole system of Ethics," although in each under a different aspect.

personality, was shown to be the more enlarged scientific aim, the sole subject to be treated scientifically for its own sake, the existence of which is undoubtedly the condition of Christian science. If it were said that the task of Dogmatics was to develop what Christian personality is in itself religiously regarded, and the task of Ethics to develop what Christian personality is morally regarded, in that case only the description of Christian piety would be strictly taken up in Dogmatics, therefore something ethical, and there would be no presentation of the objective divine foundation of piety and of those objects generally, of which faith is certain and conscious; what was retained would be at best Ethical. Rather should it be said that the starting-point of the two disciplines is undoubtedly the same, being given in Faith, which is a germinal knowledge; but in Dogmatics, looking at its contents, that side of Christian faith is treated in which faith is a knowledge of God and His acts, and not merely of the redeemed subjects, of course conditioned by experience and the consciousness of redemption; whilst Ethics, equally directed towards knowledge, has for the theme of its scientific cognition the volitional side of the Christian personality. For Thetic Theology, whether it be Dogmatics or Ethics, to begin without prefacing by a Doctrine of Faith, would not only be abrupt, and forgetful of the close unity of Thetic Theology, but would also be, as we equally see, a procedure unsafe in method.

*Observation.*—The Encyclopædia of Theology, the first part of which is the methodology of theological study, or the doctrine of the development of the theological knowledge emanating from faith, and the second part of which is the doctrine or science of the theological sciences, comes into very close contact in its first part with our preliminary investigation into that faith which is presupposed in theological knowledge; it would therefore be most convenient if I could refer to the Encyclopædia, that eminently systematic science. Still, since the customary treatment of this matter in the Encyclopædia is insufficient for our wants, an introductory discussion of the Doctrine of Faith finds its suitable place at the threshold of the thetic sciences, the more surely that such a discussion has its most intensive importance for those sciences which have to deal with Christianity as truth, but have not to interpose mere exegetic, historic, or practical knowledge.

# INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED).

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## THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH AS THE POSTULATE IN THE APPREHENSION OF CHRISTIANITY AS TRUTH.

(PISTEOLGY.)

### § 2.—*The Problem.*

FAITH, by means of which Christian experience is gained, and which must precede scientific apprehension and verification, has, it is true, a certain resemblance in all its forms, since it claims everywhere to be an appropriation of what constitutes objective Christianity. But each of these forms (the difference in which is as referable to the contents as to the manner of appropriation) is not equally well adapted to become the basis and starting-point of the scientific process. That will be the best adapted which demonstrates itself to be the most perfect advance towards truth of intrinsic value and worth. Since now faith as such terminates in an assured union with objective Christianity, the completeness of faith is to be measured, on the one hand, by the laws according to which certainty in general is fashioned, and, on the other hand, by the proportion in which the contents of objective Christianity are appropriated. The Doctrine of Faith has accordingly to follow the gradation or the orderly development of Christian faith up to the point in which union with objective Christianity is most closely attained, and immediate religious certainty is won. Only at this final step does the impulse to apprehend, which is born of faith, become able to con-

duct onwards to the scientific apprehension of the verification of the Christian contents, and of certainty concerning those contents. This Doctrine of Faith, although it is the common starting-point of Dogmatics and Ethics, has its appropriate place previously to the former.

1. If regard is paid to the common starting-point, Dogmatics and Ethics are twin and co-ordinate; for the roots of both lie side by side in the believing personality, and to both the believing spirit desires to attain, to the Christian apprehension of God and to that of human morality. But if regard is paid to the contents of both, their objects are of course related in this way, that the divine is the primary, and conditions everything else; therefore Dogmatics rightly precedes Ethics. But again both, and Dogmatics with most urgency, have to be prefaced by a doctrine of *Faith* as the personal life of the spirit, or as the state of life (Pisteology), whilst Christian Doctrine (Dogmatics) aims at being a doctrine of the contents of the thing believed as truth. It is true, a Doctrine of Faith as the personal state of life is also admitted into the first part of Thetic Theology, and within the System of Christian Doctrine; but since faith desires to apprehend itself according to the objective, divine verification both of its certainty and of its contents, or since it is one of the objects which await their verification at the hands of the Science of Faith: for these reasons it only comes to be treated here as the presupposed or generative empirical postulate of all theological knowledge, for without it the organ would be wanting for apprehending and becoming conscious of theological objects. Taken strictly, without faith and its experience, without a position within the atmosphere of Christianity, even the matter of the Bible and of history cannot be for a moment rightly understood, i.e. understood according to its essence. Faith is the postulate of Theology generally. Without it, theological vision and judgment are absent. Add to this, that faith is not only the eye adapted to this object; it also has the object of Thetic Theology for its contents and its possession; faith bears germinally within itself the substance (*ὑπόστασις* Heb xi. 1, iv. 3) of Christian truth, which for



that reason becomes fixed in Christian Doctrine, and can be brought into relief and made the subject of a cognition, which not merely perceives and is conscious of the contents of faith, but also understands the reason or the verification of the same, and apprehends its internal objective truth.

2. This prefacing by a Doctrine of Faith (Pisteology) is also necessary, in order that Christian science in its more limited sense, or Thetic Theology, should not forget its sources in experience, and fall into a false *a priorism*. Nor is it a fact that faith, which has become conformable to the Christian object, and in which, as has been shown, the living unity is found from which Dogmatics and Ethics arise, is submerged beneath these two doctrines, and, so soon as they take form, is no longer extant; according to which opinion also the bond of union between Dogmatics and Ethics would be perishable. Faith does not become absorbed in the sciences of God and of Morals as in something higher, as those think who would describe faith simply as a lower grade of knowledge, which ceases of itself when the higher is revealed. Rather, agreeably to the intimate relation between Dogmatics and Ethics, must the spirit of the whole flow on in both in a living stream. The former must remain animated by the ethical spirit, just as Ethics must carry within itself, vitally active, its dogmatic basis, the relation to God. The unity of faith, from which they start, is the life-blood which flows through and nourishes them both, at once a defence against false developments and a guarantee for their independent and yet harmonious construction. For Christian faith desires to see accomplished a harmonious, two-sided alliance of the divine and human (John iii. 16; Matt. xxii. 37-40).

3. But Christian faith may itself be transmitted in very different ways, although all its forms resemble each other in this respect, that, in order to be Christian, they must have some kind of agreement with the contents of Christianity, and some share of certainty respecting them. The difference between the phases may be the greater, that they refer either to the contents or to the form of faith. Nevertheless, in order to have a starting-point which has not been arbitrarily assumed, but is as secure as possible, an insight into the main possible forms, and a critical estimate of their value, is requisite. For every

one of the possible forms of faith cannot be equally adapted to be selected as the starting-point for the apprehension of Christianity in its internal truth. As regards the *contents*, it is allowable to imagine that even though faith would fail to be Christian, still an essential element might be wanting characteristic of Christianity according to its objective historic nature, or that something quite foreign might have become intermixed with it under the name of Christian; in both cases the error would also communicate itself to the System of Doctrine. And as regards the *form*, faith may have very different grades, or may vary in assurance respecting the Christian contents. In order, then, to obtain a just judgment upon the value of the different varieties of faith, and a starting-point for scientific Dogmatics which is not arbitrary, but accordant with the nature of things, we shall have to look about us for a valid scale for estimation. On the side of the *contents*, this will be found in the inquiry as to what is to be regarded as the characteristic essence of Christianity, since upon this, or what is held to be this, every one who desires Christian faith must wish to be agreed. It might be objected, that precisely upon what constitutes the true essence of Christianity there is an unsettled controversy, and that consequently it is a tumultuary procedure to desire to settle what can only be decided by the complete System. But the inquiry with which we have here to do is not concerned with the question as to *what is true* in Christianity, but as to *what historic Christianity is* and professes to be. This historic question, as Schleiermacher's classification of the "natural heresies of Christianity" has shown in exemplary fashion, will allow of being decided without anticipating. Then, as regards the *form* or the certainty of faith, an objective scale is not wanting even here. For however diversified and manifold the certainty of faith, it must be subject to the universal laws which hold for the formation of certainty in general. But the right application of this double scale relative to contents and to form will not merely render a judgment possible upon the true value of the different leading forms of faith, but also upon the erection and limits of possible forms, it being possible by its agency to specify a scale of approximation to the perfect form of faith,—that is to say, to that form which is

adapted to the dogmatic aim and needs, and therefore a measure of that faith which becomes materially and formally conformable to its contents *by various stages*. Accordingly, it will be incumbent upon us to specify *the orderly development of Christian faith*, which, with its contents and its certainty, is the necessary postulate of the systematic erection of Christian Doctrine; and above all, as preparatory to this specification, *to search for and firmly fix that double scale*. Moreover, it need scarcely be remarked that the whole description of faith, according to its orderly development, neither is nor aims at being in any way a proof of the truth of Christianity. It is only the presentation of the nature of the faith which conforms to the Christian object of faith, or the presentation of what concerns its Christian correctness, which subjects itself withal to the universal laws of the development of all certainty, agreeably to the connection which Christianity teaches that there is between its eternal principle and the human consciousness.<sup>1</sup> And this description of faith, according to its Christian completeness, is just as little a proof of the religious healthiness of that faith, or of its possession of a quality corresponding to the idea of piety. For it may still be asked whether the object with which faith has so completely united itself is self-evident and beyond contradiction, a question which the System of Christian Doctrine can alone resolve.

*Observation.*—Seeing that it will have to be reckoned the formal standard or touchstone of certainty (see § 4) that the mind has to acquire or receive perfect certainty from nothing else than the object itself, after it has brought itself into union with that object, it follows that Christianity binds itself to answer pre-eminently to this law. For its definite testimony is that it possesses a force which produces a certainty of the truth (*vis testificans et generans*), and upon this testimony it bases its claim to be absolute religious truth. This power of self-attestation, which it arrogates to itself, is one side of that truth, which it claims to be, and may so far be attributed to its contents. That is to say, Christianity only recognises that faith as perfect which has not merely placed itself somehow in connection with objective Christianity, but has also perceived and partaken of that side of the same, by means of which it possesses a generative faculty, conferring a

<sup>1</sup> John i. 14; comp. i. 4.

certainty of Christianity as truth; on the other hand, no form of faith can be in complete correspondence with Christianity which does not perceive and feel assured of its own self-attestation. The same conclusion follows in this way. If we inquire what is the characteristic of Christianity as contrasted with the historic religions, it is clear that Christianity claims to be the religion of Atonement and Redemption; this extends to the whole man, and therefore to his self-consciousness, his inward assurance and certainty. Thus, then, its reception into the mind cannot be adequate and successful until it is accepted and experienced to be the religion which gives fixity and certainty to the heart. But if this final stage surely follows, we have in it the norm and the touchstone of Christian completeness for every form of faith; we have also the critical faculty which ever urges onwards from one stage of faith to another.

4. With a Doctrine of Faith as the organ which appropriates and assimilates the contents of Christianity prefixed to Thetic Theology, and especially to Dogmatics, for the bringing that doctrine to systematic presentation as truth one want has been rightly remedied, which has constantly made itself felt during the more recent development of Theology, and which has been rendered prominent by that important thought which lies at the foundation of Nitzsch's system, although the description of faith, which we have in mind, cannot by any means, after Nitzsch's method, be or become Thetic Theology. The earlier customary Prolegomena, which aimed at introducing and making the contents of Dogmatics acceptable, have rightly fallen into discredit, because they resembled a fortuitous heap of propositions rather than a scientific and connected whole, and because the conceptions treated of — Religion, Revelation, the Holy Scriptures, Prophecy, Miracles, etc. — could only receive their scientific verification by means of certain doctrines of Dogmatics, which were, nevertheless, supposed to be based upon the Prolegomena. The Prolegomena assumed a scientific form, inasmuch as they were elaborated as the *apologetic* groundwork of the dogmatic contents. Men made bold to prove their truth and divinity without reference to their contents, because those contents were to be found in Holy Scripture, which demonstrates itself to be the divinely authoritative record of Revelation; an undertaking which is compelled to assume,

nevertheless, many positions concerning God which can only expect to be verified in the System of Doctrine. The Intellectualism of this method, which hoped to generate faith in Christianity by means of intellectual proofs, Schleiermacher opposed, it is true, with rich results as we have already pointed out, since he defended the independence of religion as contrasted with science and intellectual proof, and forcibly returned to faith as the source of Christian Theology. In order to make an end for ever of intellectual proofs, of the motto *intelligo ut credam*, he believes it necessary to adjudge to faith, to "the Christian consciousness" in particular, the apprehension of objective truth, and especially the apprehension of the internal verification of Christianity. He aims at nothing but expounding Christian faith, which he regards as simply a condition of pious sentiment, so that in his esteem the contents of apprehension, strictly speaking, are found in the pious subject alone and in relation to himself; and the introduction to his classical work aims at making room for Dogmatics as the scientific expression of the state of mind of the pious Christian, and at showing the method of procedure. In this standpoint Nitzsch also participates, although, being far from blind to the perils of Schleiermacher's treatment, he endeavours to anticipate them by emphasizing the biblical character of his "System," as Twisten and others do by emphasizing the ecclesiastical character of theirs. But well as the description of a Christian consciousness which harmonizes with Scripture or with the Church may prove the Christian or ecclesiastical character of such a faith, it affords no essential aid for the apprehension of Christianity as truth. This Schleiermacher does not desire, because he is content with his immediate, personal certainty or *πληροφορία*, with his sense of participation in the holiness and happiness of Christ, which is also logically correct so long as Schleiermacher's conception of "Piety, Christian Consciousness, Faith," remains unmodified,—that is to say, so long as an objective apprehension is unrecognised as an essential and immanent moment in faith. Christian faith is presupposed by Schleiermacher throughout to be a ready-made force which simply propagates itself by preaching declaratory of Christian sentiment. The same

thing may be thus expressed: According to Schleiermacher's method, Dogmatics has, strictly speaking, to present only *articuli puri* (so far as they are possible without statements concerning their objective truth), to give a description of that which is specifically Christian in the pious state of mind. But in that way Christianity, which presents itself as a new creation, would be severed from its connection with the first creation; and as for the unity of thought presented by both, that important problem of Theology would be renounced. Such self-sufficiency also of faith, which excludes everything belonging to the first creation, would certainly not be Christian faith.<sup>1</sup> For this desires to preserve within itself as the stage of perfection all the Divine revelations in nature and history. Therefore it is worthy of praise that Romang, and especially Schweizer,<sup>2</sup> recognise and treat *under Christian faith* not only pure and specific Christian doctrines, but also, in addition to these, "elementary" doctrines, a different thing to finding, with Schleiermacher, universal religious propositions by an intellectual operation of abstraction. Others, in order not to shrivel the doctrines of Christian Faith into mere statements upon Christian piety, endeavour to arrive at a series of dogmatic doctrines which may be postulated by inferences from the fact of Christian faith.<sup>3</sup> The preferable opinion is, Christianity being what it is, that *all* religious truth must belong to its domain, and therefore also to that of faith; there is no part which belongs to the domain of the deductive understanding simply.

In order not to begin abruptly with the Christian consciousness, and in order to avoid, with regard to the empirical description of the same as actually experienced, any scientific justification for the opinion that a commencement is made with faith as with a *Deus ex machina*, some have laboured to give a psychological derivation of religion, and thus to sub-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. John i. 3-14; Col. i. 13 ff.; Heb. i. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Romang, *Religionsphilosophie*, 1866. Schweizer, *Christl. Glaubenslehre*, 1863, i. § 23, pp. 56-93. Both aim with more precision than Schleiermacher at an objective truth and an objective apprehension of God.

<sup>3</sup> So, for example, Jul. Müller in his Introductory Prælection to Dogmatics. Moreover, he also recognises in faith itself an essentially theoretic element, which is directed to objective truth. Comp. his article, "*Dogmatik*," in Herzog's *Real-Encyklop.* III. pp. 436-439.

stantiate its origin and necessity. In that case it is necessary to start with the empirical fact of religion and of religions, in order to discover their basis in the universal essence of human nature. By the *universality* of the essence of human nature, which gives birth to religion, the *necessity* of religion, and of those mental representations without which religion could not exist, appears to be confirmed, and a sufficient verification of religion appears to have been won. But for the apprehension of the objective truth of religious representations—on which the pious man must of course rely, for too conscious of untrue representation, he could no longer hold a religious position—nothing has been done by proving the fact that they are recognised as a psychological necessity; nothing has been done, for example, to save the consciousness of freedom in the midst of dependence upon the world. Even a necessity to err might be reckoned part of our nature, if we remained entirely shut up to our actual psychological state. Further, neither the universality of faith in God, nor the universality of that psychological constitution in all human beings which generates religion, is to be proved empirically. The proof from mere induction remains eternally incomplete; validity therefore remains eternally wanting. But, finally,—and this is the most important consideration,—granted that the demonstration of religion as the universal and therefore necessary product of human nature has been scientifically reached, the demonstration has abolished what it undertook to verify, namely religion. For, having succeeded in excluding God and His acts from the process of the origin of religion, and in conceiving religion as a purely subjective product, the superfluousness of an objective Deity would also be demonstrated; the demonstration of the purely subjective necessity of the mental representation of God would be equivalent to razing the foundations of the objective truth of the idea of God, which would thus become a gratuitous luxury. A God, who was simply the product of the percipient mind, and who was not at the same time the producer of the divine idea, would not be God, and would not be in a position to offer resistance to Atheism and Materialism.<sup>1</sup> Biedermann might

<sup>1</sup> The above is the course of thought which the *Dogmatik* of Lipsius upsets. But that book in its turn shakes the foundation of Dogmatics, which has

seem to agree essentially with Lipsius,<sup>1</sup> and likewise to regard religion as simply a subjective product of the finite spirit, which conceives *itself* in its internal infinitude. For he so speaks of the pure immanence of the religious process in the human spirit that the process would appear to be purely subjective, particularly if the numerous points of contact with Lipsius are superadded, which follow from his teaching concerning "direct mental representation" (*Vorstellung*), in contradistinction from "pure thought."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, he has also become a precursor of Lipsius in this respect, that he starts from "the immediate empirical fact of religion which is to hand," in order to obtain its universal concept and its necessary moments by means of the logical analysis of its essential elements. Even in this his attention is already directed towards the apprehension "of the innermost indivisible foundation of the empirical fact of religion, that is, of its essence;" but religion is to him not merely the relation of the finite spirit to a self-originated mental representation of God, but the relation of man to God founded upon the relation of God to man; it is to him a real relation of interchange between both.<sup>3</sup> God and man are not to him, according to his analysis of religion, one identical quantity; but revelation, which is the self-determined relation of God towards man, answers to faith, which is a self-determined relation towards God, of which there could be no talk in the strict sense of the word, unless God was shown strictly to be the active subject of this incidence upon the human ego.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore unjust for Lipsius to leave this and similar statements unnoticed, which transcend the con-

been presumably won, since it regards all statements of faith as mental representations that are *essentially* infected with untruth, as especially accrues upon measurement with the idea of the Absolute, itself again assuredly a representation, because it has in his esteem its source in religion. It is surprising that Lipsius has not allowed himself to give utterance to the above concerning Lange (*Gesch. des Materialismus*), who was formerly so highly esteemed by him, and so largely employed as a *testis veritatis* against Biedermann.

<sup>1</sup> *Christl. Dogmatik*, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* § 20, and the Excursus upon the essence of Representation, pp. 41-53, in which I hold it pre-eminently to be erroneous if "Mental Representation" is formally regarded simply as an abstract perception of the senses.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* §§ 8, 14, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 27, 36, 37.



clusion at which Lipsius arrives in relation to the objective truth of the idea of God, and simply to descry Nihilism to be their final result.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it may, of course, be said that religion, the starting-point of Biedermann, or the self-evidence of the religious consciousness, has God as its postulate, but is, nevertheless, no security that this postulate has objective validity, unless there is already contained in religion itself an immediate knowledge of God as objectively real, which is beyond the possibility of "illusion" by "*Vorstellung*." It remains therefore possible that only the peculiar essence of the subject, thought as infinite, may express itself in religion, but God would not be regarded as a separate Being contradistinguished from the human ego. Revelation has certainly only arrived at its goal when it is not merely an act of Deity, but enters into the religious life of the human ego.<sup>2</sup> But the next step is to present the event which takes place in the spiritual life of man as an act of God, who is not far from the finite spirit or foreign to it, but still objectively opposed to it. That is especially important for Christian faith, which is conscious of a divine communication, that may not be transformed into a mere perception of a relation, which, according to the concept of God and of man, exists always and unchangeably; for by that means the objective reality of Christianity would be denied at the outset, and only a difference in the subjective consciousness of the true and persistent essence of man would be assumed. J. T. Beck, Fr. Reiff, Frank, and especially J. Köstlin, stand nearer to the method indicated above as the right one.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This idea follows for Lipsius for this reason, that Biedermann shows the Godhead to be outside of and above the realm of "*Vorstellung*," which would, of course, be identical to the denial of God, if, as Lipsius presupposes, the Godhead would also be inaccessible to the thinking human spirit, and non-existent within the same. But that is certainly a deviation from Biedermann, who accentuates the immanence of God in the spirit as opposed to Lipsius, assuredly bribed by the acceptance of the statement that God and the finite spirit are related to each other as the whole to the part, of which this is not the place to speak further.

<sup>2</sup> Compare *Christl. Dogmatik*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Beck, *Einleitung in das System der christl. Lehre oder propädeutische Entwicklung der christl. Lehrwissenschaft*, 1838, ed. 1; Reiff, *die christl. Glaubenslehre als Grundlage der christl. Weltanschauung*, ed. 2, 1876, vol. I. pp. 1-284; J. Köstlin, *der Glaube, sein Wesen, Grund und Gegenstand, seine Bedeutung für Erkennen, Leben und Kirche*, 1859, pp. 1-134.

Beck's clumsy but thoughtful work has performed the service in a time when faith is apt to be regarded simply as a subjective condition of feeling, of having made strongly appreciable the interest of objective truth and its apprehension, and that in the closest unity with faith. That object he attains, inasmuch as he treats truth as a divine thing potent by nature, and the spiritual world as an independent empire, as an empire of life (like that of nature), which must reveal itself to us with its contents and its laws, in order that we may be able to produce in thought true spiritual forms. By the instrumentality of faith, which assimilates this revelation, we are introduced into this higher empire, and this empire is introduced into us. As faith, Christianity is "no mere objective history or subjective doctrine, but an inscrutable, penetrating life of the spirit, the spiritual man, τὸ πνεῦμα,<sup>1</sup> at once objective and subjective." This faith, which has united itself with the matter of Christianity, and is bound up with its primitive record, is the origin and source of true knowledge. Materially it is truth, since truth constitutes it; truth is the substance present in it and defining it. But formally, also, it is truth as far as essential truth is known in faith after the appropriate manner of truth.<sup>2</sup> By virtue of its contents, which give precision and realization to the spirit, faith is also, like the objective empire of truth, a System of Practice (*Lebens-system*), and this System of Practice must at the same time be the System of Doctrine.<sup>3</sup> The doctrinal system must present the practical system in verbal form in its several divisions. That Practical System is in itself a complete system of the infinite divine life; but these infinite contents are only gradually expounded by faith, as faith assimilates the finite step by step or thought by thought. On the other hand, the contents of faith have already been long ago expounded as a complete System of Practice in a peculiar and closed revelation, in an original product of the life of the spirit, the Holy Scriptures, from which that thought which aims at gnosis must draw, transcending the limits of the incomplete subjective state of faith.<sup>4</sup> This scientific thought which faith sets in motion must thus portray that vital connection of truth

<sup>1</sup> Beck, pp. 4, 10, 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 11, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 27, 28.

which underlies the canon of revelation in its genesis or genetically, and must develop itself with logical consequence into precise conceptions, whereby by a union of synthesis and analysis the result may follow of the combination of the universal and the particular.<sup>1</sup> The smaller work delineates, therefore, the Practical System of Faith, which is, at the same time, the Practical System of Revelation laid down in the canon of Scripture; and this delineation is just to Beck the form of the scientific System of Doctrine or of Science, and therefore makes the system of Christian Doctrine and Christian Morals substantially agree *in nuce*,<sup>2</sup>—makes a change of the organism of fact (*Realorganismus*) in Christian doctrine into an organism of idea (*Begriffsorganismus*), and thus gives more than we need for our purpose, since the system of doctrine in Logic, Ethics, and Physics, when in danger of collapse, has only to give a further deduction of that which is already contained in what is taught to tyros (*Propädeutik*). At a clear and precise distinction between the scientific process and the process of faith, Beck is unable to arrive; gnosis is to him a finishing-touch to faith, able to give to thought not merely its contents, but also its form and method.<sup>3</sup> The position also which he gives to the Holy Scriptures as the original presentation of the organism of the facts of truth, has too little scientific foundation.

Reiff equally recognises the necessity for a "Forecourt" for Dogmatics, and lays one down with the purpose of placing the structure of Christian Doctrine in union with humanity generally. This preliminary structure, so far as seems possible from the standpoint of the universal human reason, already affords the verification of the doctrines out of which, in his esteem, the System of Christian Doctrine may be constructed. Ultimately the Forecourt will provide a way for fixed and real starting-points for the discussion of Faith and Religion with their postulates. Such an introduction cites at once in behalf of the positions of the Christian religion the testimony of *natural* facts

<sup>1</sup> Beck, pp. 23, 24, 36-38.

<sup>2</sup> Science itself is thus only a further development of "Propædeutics," and is further distinguished from the latter only quantitatively, and by means of a stricter relationship to the Scriptures.

<sup>3</sup> P. 25: "It (faith) also enlarges the determinations of our thought beyond their finite limitations." P. 17: "Faith itself gives the principles and method of its presentation as well as its peculiar form."

without man in the structure of the universe, which point to God, and of facts in man (Reason, the moral consciousness); thus it cites the testimony of Christian facts for specifically Christian positions. These Christian facts are contained in history and its testimony, in the Holy Scriptures—with miracles as the proof of divine revelation, and finally in actual Christian experience. But the foundation of Faith and Religion being now laid, these attach themselves to the objective postulates of the divine approach to man contained in the general and particular revelation, the latter of which is given in the inspired Scriptures. This approach of God to man is the means whereby human approach to God—subjective faith and subjective religion—are brought about, and these form the pre-suppositions for Christian Doctrine. The deduction itself affords much valuable aid in showing how the natural facts within and without us already point to God, and how the Christian positions appear to be theoretically rational, although the Christian facts first make the conclusion certain. To the doctrines treated with this end belong, therefore, the “existence of God,”—as Almighty, Holy, Free, and Personal,—and Revelation, the Scriptures, etc., doctrines, clearly, which themselves undoubtedly belong to the System of Doctrine, and have no standing without that system. To exhibit the harmony between natural facts and facts specifically Christian, is, of course, an extremely important task; but the interweaving of the universal human consciousness and the Christian consciousness relatively to single doctrines, must have its place within the System itself; treated for its own sake and outside the System, the Introduction or Forecourt would have to give us a *Theologia naturalis* to start with, or a compound of *Articuli mixti*,—a relative whole, upon which the whole of Christian Doctrine would have immediately to follow. And if the System of Christian Doctrine should, in fact, embrace everything which the Christian believes, it must repeat what is contained in the Forecourt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reiff himself designates the preliminary questions treated of in his “Forecourt” “dogmatic” (I. 4); he further acknowledges it to be an anticipation (p. 5) in relation to the idea of God, and to sin, and to redemption, and simply assigns to the System of Doctrine a “further deduction” in this matter, whilst he regards the principal verification to have been given in the “Forecourt.” But

Frank sees that it is insufficient simply to present faith as it exists, and to treat this presentation as Dogmatics. In the interests of the clearness and the security of faith, as well as of that readiness to afford justification which is part and parcel of a good conscience, he requires faith to know the objective and subjective grounds of its assurance, and to be in a position to authenticate itself, but not after the manner of the old Apologetics. Faith must prove its legitimacy of itself, the moral and logical necessity of the act of faith; only by that means can it defend itself against the suspicion of resting its certainty on caprice and imagination. And thus he desires to preface Dogmatics by a Doctrine of Christian Faith (as a new state of life), which may at the same time render secure the theological character of the dogmatic system, as distinguished from mere Metaphysics. But if Frank thinks in the "*System of Certainty*," upon which Dogmatics and Ethics may immediately follow, to be able to give the scientific verification of the contents of both, he either pledges himself to verify those contents without first touching upon them and without applying himself to their study (and that would be to introduce a hazardous relationship to the old formal Apologetics), or else he is constrained to repetitions, since Dogmatics (upon which, besides, Ethics depends) must expound the same materials with a little more detail, with historical and exegetical additions, and with the demonstration of the absence of contradiction in the statements of faith, which have already been treated in the *System of Certainty*. Frank inclines to the latter course, but he also at the same time anticipates a good portion of what rightly belongs to Dogmatics. The proof of the contents of faith can only be arrived at if the objective contents are brought into the field, which, if they are true, must possess in themselves a power of self-evidence and vindication. Thence it simply follows that the solution of the problem which underlay the intention of the old Apologetics, and which, of course, required to be solved, can only be found

as far as that vicious circle is concerned, according to which our experience leads us to God from our self-consciousness as a sure point of departure, whilst conversely the idea of God once apprehended demonstrates itself to be the sure point of departure, the verifying cause of our experience, there is no ground for seeing why Reiff should not discuss at its appropriate place in the System his seeming paradox and its solution.

in the System itself, but may for all that occupy therein a preparatory section.

5. Now, of course, a beginning cannot be abruptly made with the superstructure of the doctrinal System. For ability to proceed is not possessed by every man, though he be scientifically equipped, but only by him who stands in the atmosphere of the facts treated, that is to say, by the Christian believer. Therefore a Doctrine of Faith must precede, which gives an account of what the faith of the Christian consists in, how it arrives at certainty as to Christianity, and how far it includes the necessary preliminaries for the erection of the doctrinal System. Hence it will not do to go upon faith which is already formed and ready to hand, as Frank does in his *System of Certainty* (and as Schleiermacher and Nitzsch do according to their methods); but it will be necessary to premise a description of the growth of faith and of its certainty, of its genesis by means of the different possible relations to Christianity as well as to the requirements which regulate certainty generally, as an introduction to the System which has to be constructed out of ripened and developed faith. This description of faith (of the *fides quæ credit* with its religious certainty) makes no claim either as regards contents or form, as we have already said, nor could it claim, to be of itself the satisfaction of the desire for the scientific apprehension of the verification of faith; it does afford the indispensable postulate for the scientific apprehension of Christianity in itself and in its truth. Many a point suitable for our purpose is to be found scattered throughout the writings already named, but with most connectedness in the work of J. Köstlin.<sup>1</sup>

But before we advance to the delineation of the genesis of faith and of its certainty, our *first* task must be, according to what has been previously said, to determine what is the characteristic of Christianity, historically regarded, with which faith must have united itself in order to be called Christian faith. *Secondly*, we must determine what are the universal requisites of genuine certainty, formally regarded, to which

<sup>1</sup> Especially in the two sections: On the Essence and Growth of Faith, and of the Apprehension of Faith, pp. 13-134. Mention should also be made of the works of Löwe, *die Offenbarung*, 1877; and Carblom, *zur Lehre von der christl. Gewissheit*, 1874.

even Christianity must submit, so far as it requires and promises certainty, and to which faith must correspond.

§ 3.—I. *The Characteristic of Christianity as a Historic Magnitude amongst the other Religions of the World.*

The central fact of the Christian Religion, which faith, in order to be Christian, must have assimilated into its conviction, is Jesus Christ, who is, according to the faith of Christendom, as a personal unity of the divine life and the human, the Redeemer and the Perfecter of humanity.

*Observation.*—It will be readily understood from what precedes that the question to be discussed in this paragraph will afford no proof of the truth of the Christian fundamental principle, but simply states what is its original being and essence, so that in and with it Christianity itself is given. Nor do we inquire as to the objective and subjective conditions, under which it substantiates and certifies itself to the spirit, as to the *principium cognoscendi objectivum et sub-jectivum* (according to the Evangelical doctrine, the Word of God with the Holy Spirit and faith), nor as to the Phænomenology or the Method of Growth of Christian Knowledge; we inquire as to the principle of the existence of Christianity itself according to its own declaration of its nature.

1. If the Christian religion is regarded as one amongst others, it is evident at the outset that Christ occupies in it a wholly different position to what the other founders of religion occupy in their special spheres.<sup>1</sup> For the contents of the other religions have but a casual relationship to the person of the founder; he is believed in indeed, but of a peculiar faith in him there can be no mention. It is otherwise in the Christian religion. For here the person of the founder has divested itself of the casual, it has itself become an essential constituent of the religion, it has raised itself to a doctrinal importance in the religion. Christianity stands amongst the other religions of the world as the religion of Redemption, if we look to that in which its individuality lies,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher, *der christl. Glaube*, § 11, 4.

or to that upon which the most intensive piety is built up within the circuit of Christendom. And Redemption is regarded by Christian faith as grounded in the person of Jesus, because of the unprecedented union of divine and human life in His personal nature and in His action, a union certain to the believer. At the same time, the redemption through Christ is known to be complete and adequate, because of the power which embraces within itself liberation from the consciousness of error and penalty, from sin and evil, and which from that circumstance is the power of the perfection of the individual as well as of the community. From this point of view the principal heresies which oppose Christianity, and which retain the appearance but not the essence of Christianity, may be intelligibly viewed, as Schleiermacher has done in masterly manner; on the one hand, the Ebionitic and the Doketic, which so present Christ that He has lost the ability to redeem—both of which may very well coexist, the one being the obverse of the other;<sup>1</sup> and, on the other hand, the Pelagian and the Manichæan, which so present man that there can be no talk of a redemption, that being thought either superfluous or impossible. To this double pair in Christology and Anthropology a Theological pair may be added, viz. Deism and Pantheism, the former of which is related to Ebionitism and Pelagianism, the latter to Doketism and Manichæism.

2. The same fact presents itself as the central fact of the Christian religion, if we look at the records, in which Christian faith expressed itself at its origin. By common consent the New Testament designates Jesus the foundation-stone, the corner-stone of the new building, that is, of the Kingdom of God. Christ is the *θεμέλιος* (1 Cor. iii. 11), the *λίθος ἀκρογωνιαίος*, for the whole Christian religion (Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17; Acts iv. 11; Eph. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7). More closely regarded, Christianity, as is recognised by all, makes a twofold claim; in the first place,

<sup>1</sup> As is the case with the doctrines now again not seldom met with, which separate the "Jesus" from the "Christ," dealing with the Jesus in an Ebionitic manner, but with the Christ in a Doketic, because he is not realized in Jesus of Nazareth. But an approach is once more made to historic Christianity, if instead of speaking of the "ideal Christ" we talk of the "Christian principle," or of "the principle of historic Christianity," which actually commenced its realization in Jesus.



that it is *Power* and *Life*; that it is the sole channel of the life in God, the perfect life; therefore, that it also contains within itself the power of atonement, redemption, and perfection, in short, the power of perfect religion. Secondly, that it is *religious truth*, and communicates true knowledge or enlightenment. Since it claims to be *φῶς* and *ζωή*, to bring the *life* and the *light* of the world, it embraces in its claims as regards the religious sphere the *real* and the *ideal* world. Two sides are thus equally essential to it, and their absolute union constitutes the idea which it presents of itself,—the historically real and the eternally ideal. This is its essence, that its historical element or its reality in Jesus Christ is at the same time, and by its very nature, ideal,—that is to say, is nothing else than the realization of the ideal in history, and thus is the truth (John xiv. 6); and that its ideal divine essence aims at being, and actually is, realized in historical facts (John i. 14; 1 John i. 1, etc.). It accredits itself as religious truth which has appeared in realized form and as the true realization. Christ is Θεοῦ δύναμις καὶ Θεοῦ σοφία.<sup>1</sup> This perfect union of truth and of historical realization Christianity asserts to have been fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; He is to Christianity, whilst none of the other religions puts in a claim to a similar realization, the absolutely singular and original point of coincidence of the real and the ideal, the point in which both meet, in which heaven and earth are bridged; indeed, heaven has stooped to earth, to the earthly present, in order to found the Kingdom of Heaven. He is the nucleus which potentially bears within itself a new world, which has the power of recreating the old, through which, therefore, the union with the divine is transplanted into estranged humanity by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who actively proceeds from Him to the Church. This Jesus Christ, as the personal unity of the divine and human, the ideal and the real, is called by the Church the God-man, is consequently practically regarded the principle (*Realprinciple*) of Christianity; in Him Christianity has its source, and that so absolutely, that without Him Christianity

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 24. John i. 17 is of the same tenor, *χάρις* and *ἀλήθεια* have become history in Jesus Christ (*ἰστορία*). Similarly 1 John iv. 2, 3 (*Χριστὸς ἐστὶν πρὸς τὴν λαλῶσάν*). Col. ii. 9, the fulness of the Godhead was *σωματικῶς* in Him.

would be unthinkable. With Him, therefore, faith must be in union in order to receive the name of Christian faith in any true sense. And, further, the scientific verification of Christianity in its central fact will be complete if Jesus Christ, the God-man, is apprehended according to both sides of His nature, and according to their unity.

3. After this discussion it is not difficult to estimate other representations of the central or vital point of the Christian religion. Attention may be directed to Theology or to Anthropology; with reference to the latter, either to the Doctrine of Sin, which renders redemption necessary, or to the Doctrine of the Redeemed Consciousness.

*Theology*, looked at as a Doctrine of the Trinity, is insufficient for the purpose in view. Seeing that there are also non-Christian doctrines of God, and even of a Trinity, to adduce a doctrine of God, though it were also a doctrine of a Trinity, would by no means necessarily express that which was essentially or characteristically Christian. Either the trinitarian doctrine of God is apprehended apart from the revelation in the world; in that case it is far removed from the teaching of Christianity. Thus the Greek Doctrine of the Trinity latterly stood in danger of losing its connection with history and with redemption, the consequence of which must be the religious insignificance of the doctrine of the Trinity. Or the doctrine in question has a relation to revelation and its consummation; then it must of necessity include the doctrine of the God-man, in whom alone God becomes the fully revealed God. On the other hand, a doctrine of Deity generally, without any relation maintained toward Christ, does not express that which is specifically Christian. The Christian idea of God is, in our opinion, not exclusive of Christ, but has its full security in Him. That which is specifically Christian begins with Christ; all the doctrines of faith become specifically Christian only through Him. But, as should be remarked, such an opinion does not preclude the systematic presentation of the Christian idea of God, that is, of that idea which has become certain to the Christian by the apprehension of faith, from starting from that idea and advancing toward the verification of the God-man. That will be possible if by means of Christian experience the

Christian idea of God is recognised as that which is certain in itself and supreme.

*Anthropology*, in which the Doctrine of Creation culminates, can be still less plausibly shown to be the central point of the Christian religion; for in that case Christianity would regard the God-man simply as the product of the species, but not as the "Word become flesh." That view would be still more diametrically opposed to the fundamental Christian idea. According to 1 Cor. xv. 45, the first Adam, if not created sinful, was still *χοϊκός, ψυχικός*, whilst it was only the second Adam who was *πνευματικός*. Paul regards the origin of the second Adam as conditioned by a new divine act from heaven, and says nothing about a sinless, immanent development of the first Adam, able to attain to the height vouchsafed to humanity in the second. Add to this, that the doctrine of humanity outside of Christ, as a humanity beset by corruption, belongs to the fundamental postulates of Christianity.

For the last reason it might be thought possible to erect *Ponerology* into the fundamental doctrine, the ground dogma of Christian Doctrine. Christian Dogmatics, it would then be said, had a necessary presupposition, the sinfulness of the race; and this being so, everything else would have its close coherence.

But Sin cannot be constituted the fundamental position of Dogmatics, because the appearance of the God-man would only be explained by such a representation of the essence of humanity, according to which this essence re-acted for the preservation of humanity of itself, and according to an inner necessity, by producing the true ideal man,—an opinion which would lead back to the Pelagian error already rejected (as to the power of man to redeem himself), and which would be foreign to Christianity. To the explanation of the appearance of Christ, there belongs side by side with the human need of redemption and the ability to be redeemed, still further back in the history of redemption, as has just been shown, a very definite idea of God. Besides, the importance of the appearance of Christ is not exhausted, according to the Christian conception, in the vanquishing of sin. He is also regarded, by the hope essential to Christian faith, as the Perfecter, though in such a way that by means of this last purpose of His appearance the other and more immediate aim, namely,

atonement and redemption, is neither rendered superfluous nor limited. On the contrary, if sin exists, the way to complete restoration will lie in abolition of evil; and, conversely, only in the same power which suffices for perfection will the power of the atonement be sufficiently secured.

Better, therefore, is the position of Frank, whose acute work, displaying an uncommon scientific power, deserves a closer exposition and estimate. He seeks in his *System of Certainty* to find at the outset the point in which Christian certainty, the subjective guarantee of Christian truth as real, has its foundation, in order to span from that starting-point the whole of Christian truth which presents itself objectively in Dogmatics, or in the consciousness of the dogmatic theologian, as a self-included, organic complexity. This ultimate and certain point, on which the certainty of all other Christian contents depends, Frank thinks himself able to show as lying in the peculiar state of the believer, in his new birth and conversion, which are allied with consciousness. That is, in his esteem, the central doctrine for the *System of Certainty*. There dwells within the subject of the new birth an altogether peculiar certainty, different from the certainty of the natural Ego, a certainty which rests upon itself, since the new Ego is at the same time object and subject.<sup>1</sup> Just as the one original certainty to the natural man is his self-consciousness, and from this certainty all other certainty follows only as something secondary or derivative; indeed, as this original certainty of the self-consciousness, because of its relation to the Ego, constitutes the measure of all other certainty, the same thing is repeated in like manner in the Christian sphere. There lies at the foundation of Christian certainty a special moral experience, that of the new birth and conversion. The former (the new birth) refers back to an objective divine impulse through which it originates and is preserved; conversion refers back to a free human activity, which receives the divine impulse into itself, and confirms it. Through both

<sup>1</sup> A searching criticism of his very noteworthy inquiry is the more timely, inasmuch as it does not appear to have hitherto met with that esteem in the theological world which it deserves, and inasmuch as the principal question remains, what is the central point of Christianity, and that ultimate foundation upon which Christian certainty leans?

together in their intimate unity a new Ego, a new condition of moral life, is formed, which recognises itself to be novel, and contains within itself a satisfying certainty upon which to rest, the more surely that this new state of life not simply knows that it is, not simply possesses a consciousness of its existence or a self-consciousness as a matter of fact, but also a knowledge that it is morally justified and necessary. The object, and not merely the subject, of this central certainty is in his esteem the *new man*, the Ego who is born again and converted. With this central personal certainty the objects of Christian faith have also become attainable for the certainty of the Christian man,—that is, Christian truth has become attainable (I. 41), although progressively. The innermost circle of the objects of faith, certainty upon which the new-born Ego attains on the ground of the new condition of life, is formed by facts which are *immanent* in that self-conscious Ego. As such immanent objects of faith he mentions these:—1. By the relation between the Ego of the new birth and the natural Ego the Christian is convinced of *sin*, habitual and actual, as well as of the *natural will in its lack of freedom*. 2. By the process of the new birth, in which the new Ego has its origin and existence, the Christian is convinced of his habitual and actual *righteousness*, as well as of the *freedom of the spiritual will*. 3. In the introduction of the new Ego into the centre of the personality, the Christian has the guarantee of the future determination of his entire being from that centre outward, or the *certain hope of perfection*. Such is the sphere of the central certainty, of the self-consciousness of the new state of life, with its happiness. It is only upon this primary sphere, in which there is nothing objective as yet embodied, nothing about God or Christ, or the Holy Ghost, and which is nothing but Christian *self-consciousness*, resting, nevertheless, so surely upon itself that the additional testimony of the Holy Ghost is not regarded as necessary, the *καινή κτίσις* having within itself breath and life and self-consciousness,—it is only upon this primary sphere that there follows, according to Frank,<sup>1</sup> as a secondary thing, a second concentric circle, a mediate and additional certainty of the objects of faith, one group of which he calls *transcendent* and the other *transeunt*. The former

<sup>1</sup> Frank, I. pp. 75-126, 168-210; II. 1, etc., 286, etc.

relates to God and His works. The new Ego is only able to explain itself and its nature by means of the mutual influence of opposite factors; and in that fact, besides, there lies—(1) the guarantee for the *reality and personality* of God; (2) the guarantee for the one personal God *as the triune*; and (3) the *necessity of the atonement* by the God-man, the sinless one, the substitute, the vanquisher of death (I. 275–349). As the *transcendent* objects of faith he enumerates the Church, the Word of God and the Scriptures, the Sacraments, Miracles, Revelation, and Inspiration. A third circle, which is wider still, delineates, in the last place, the relation of Christian certainty to the objects of the natural life. The principal thing in his esteem is therefore “the sure central point,” that real and true matter of thought, which at the same time of itself works certainty concerning itself and its truth, and which has to transfer this certainty of its own to everything else which is important for religion, but which, that it may oppose all possible doubts issuing from the life of thought, as well as that it may be clearly self-conscious, requires a scientific verification of its well-founded rightfulness; and the *System of Certainty* aims just at being the verification of the certainty of the contents of faith. But verification is attained solely inasmuch as the *System of Certainty* derives all contents from the self-evident consciousness of the new birth by analyzing its contents. Now such a System, taken strictly, would only be a description of the Christian or regenerate consciousness after the manner of Schleiermacher, but for the fact that Frank in his *System of Certainty*, by means of retrogressions to the objective dogmatic contents, thinks to arrive at a rich explication. Still, even were more importance attached to the objectivity of the Christian contents, the certainty of these contents receives its ultimate justification in something subjective, in the consciousness of the new birth. Frank has simply a subjective principle of knowledge, not an objective principle (as is also the case with his *System der christl. Wahrheit*, of which we shall speak presently). Thus his verification of the Christian contents and of Christian certainty is not objective, but a superstructure based upon mere subjectivity. We are referred back to the opinion that the *self-consciousness* of the regenerate Christian is to be the central

certainty, which rests upon itself as foundation, and contributes of its certainty to everything else. But it is allowable to doubt whether the consciousness of the new birth can be the ultimate certainty upon which all other certainty depends. The new birth is a growth and not a perfected state; the consciousness of the new birth is not identical with its existence; whilst the new birth has something about it of the intellectual, it is pre-eminently ethico-religious. It is *justification*, not the new birth and sanctification, which is complete and perfect of its kind according to the Christian, and especially the Evangelical, conception. Therefore that "central certainty" would have at all events to direct its first attention to this, and not to the new birth. It would be this, the so-called Material Principle of the Evangelical Churches, which includes, according to Luther's phrase in the Articles of Smalkald (305), the whole Gospel. Further, strictly speaking, faith cannot be shown to be justifying, since it does not itself justify according to the Evangelical doctrine, but it only lays hold upon and receives the divine gift of justification in Christ, whence we are again referred back to Christ as the objective mediator of salvation, to the Christ *for us*, in whom alone can lie the principle of the Christ *in us*. For Him, too, justification and atonement are by no means the goal, perfection is the goal; and that is better secured if the God-man is regarded as the medium of the Christian religion, than it would be if justification, or the new birth and conversion, were shown to be the medium. Add to this also, that Frank's *self*-consciousness of the regenerate "resting upon itself" is to be objected to, particularly as no pretence is made of affirmation respecting God and Christ. For the consideration of these subjects rather falls, according to Frank, in the second and derivative circle, which only borrows its certainty from the first and central circle. If God did not produce the new life and the consciousness of salvation, semblance and imagination would alone result; and if God did not originate the knowledge that salvation and the consciousness of salvation are His work, these would possess no objective security. God must be by logical necessity the ultimate guarantee and source of all true certainty; it is not our frail condition of belief, our righteous but subjective nature, which is the ultimate source of our certainty of God

and Christ. There is an immediate knowledge of God, and not merely a secondary knowledge produced by inference from effect to cause. We Christians know ourselves, as Paul frequently assures us,<sup>1</sup> as partakers of salvation, inasmuch as we are known of God, and we know ourselves as thus known. So it also happens, according to John, with reference to Christian certainty, that we are certain of something objective, of communion with Christ, of Christ for us, and of Christ abiding in us.<sup>2</sup> We are not first certain of God by being conscious of ourselves (as regenerate and converted); but experiencing and knowing God in Christ as being for us, we know ourselves as redeemed. The condition of the believer, and its certainty, does not come about in this way, that we feel ourselves to be regenerate and children of God, but we first experience the gracious regard of God, who shows Himself to us as our Father in Christ, and now we cry, "Abba, dear Father," and know—for this reason, that He has announced Himself to us as a Father in the Son—ourselves to be His children. This is the logical and necessary relation, although not that which is consciously apprehended by every one. Accordingly, the foundation of the *System of Certainty* is too subjective, and has too great a resemblance to the method of Schleiermacher. Certain as it is that according to Christian teaching the certainty of faith and the new birth only arise by assimilation of the Christian object, it is just as certain that the Ego does not confer certainty upon that object, but it is that object which confers upon the assimilating Ego certainty upon itself and the new life. Apprehensive faith, which is also certain of salvation, is not the ultimate principle which guarantees, but simply the subjective point of transference, by means of which objective salvation forms an image of itself in knowledge—in the certainty of faith. It is possible for faith, and even necessary, instead of remaining satisfied with the subjective, to direct its attention to the ultimate objective,<sup>3</sup> upon which also the proper verification of salvation and the certainty of the saved must rest. Worst of all, Frank<sup>4</sup> supposes a contrast to all this which recalls the absolute autonomy of the Christian consciousness: Christian certainty

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John iii. 24, v. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Frank, I. 40.



must, according to him, know itself as having its foundation in itself, and as needing no verification of itself lying farther back. But with that opinion another is connected which will likewise gain no approval, that Frank underrates the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum* for the certainty of faith, and only thinks of treating it as something subjective, whilst conversely without the same even Frank's central self-assurance must remain purely subjective and hang in the air.<sup>1</sup> According to the Scriptures, the testimony for our adoption of God is divine and human, the latter because of the former, since the divine glance of pity in Christ is that which prevenges and is first.<sup>2</sup>

As the result both of positive proof and the investigation of the opposite points of view, it follows that faith and its certainty, the growth and nature of which we would under-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 16; 1 John v. 6, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Köstlin, pp. 26, 47, 48, 60, 63, 87. To my delight, in the first volume of his *System der christlichen Wahrheit*, which has just appeared, Frank has partly dissipated the fear which naturally arose that this work would simply be a more complete presentation of the contents already treated in the *System der christlichen Gewissheit*. It professes to start from the supreme, self-evident, objective principle, from God (§ 7), and at giving by that means an objective verification to the world of Christian realities (or the Christian dogmas), such as did not fall to their share in the *System of Christian Certainty*. Still, in his *System of Christian Certainty* and in his *System of Christian Truth*, Frank presents, strictly regarded, two Doctrines of Faith, one of which would pass from beneath upwards, from the subjective and empirical knowledge of the Christian to God; the other of which, to which he also gives the name of the Metaphysics of Christian Truth, would proceed from above downwards. Both give the Christian contents, but under a different aspect (*System of Christian Truth*, pp. 9, 44). The first partly explaining (after Beck's manner) the contents immanent in faith, partly deducing the same *via causalitatis* by a return to the necessary presuppositions; the second following the objective order and foundation of the facts in God. He describes (p. 44) the difference thus: "Whilst the *System of Certainty* according to its nature advances from the subjective state produced upwards to the producing factors, be they transcendent or transeunt, the *System of Christian Truth* moves from the producing factors downwards to the state produced, commencing with absolute Being, namely, the absolute, personal, triune God, advancing thence to the creation as thus conditioned, but looking onwards, as a sequel to this creation, to the final goal, the actual state of Christian being," etc. It is true he designates the first part phenomenological, and according to that title the objective contents of Christian truth are not to be regarded as the contents especially aimed at, but only *certainty* upon those contents. But really this part already deals with the whole Christian contents, and would verify the same for the subjective consciousness by establishing that as certainly as the new condition or faith exists, the Christian must have, for the sake of the same, objects of Christian faith. Conversely, as distinguished from a *System of Certainty*, a *System of Christian Truth* sounds more

take to describe, can only be called Christian faith in the full sense of the word, when, as regards its contents, it has united itself with the central fact of the Christian religion, with Jesus Christ as the personal unity of divine life and human, in whom the powers of redemption and perfection are included. Thus, as regards the contents, we have a test whether a variety or stage of faith has attained that Christian ripeness, starting whence, according to the promise of Christianity, a scientific apprehension and verification of Christianity are possible.

#### § 4.—II. *Of the Formal Requisites of Certainty generally.*

Certainty or conviction generally, whether upon something external or internal, whether in the sphere of the universal consciousness of man or of the Christian

objective, it must be confessed ; but it is directed precisely to the objective verification of certainty, because to the objective verification of Christian Truth. Both (Certainty and Truth), as others have remarked, refuse to be separated. If an attempt is made to divide them, it will scarcely be possible to proceed differently from what Frank does in his noteworthy work, and the result is a double Dogmatics, the one of which follows the method recommended by J. Müller, the other follows a more speculative method. But to this *overdoing* an *underdoing* is opposed. Frank begins abruptly with the religious certainty of the Christian, as if it were no part of the problem to treat of this religious certainty in its origin and growth. The religious certainty of the Christian, i.e. the self-existence of the new state of life, is rather presupposed by Frank as already existing, and his only endeavour is to build up the same into a science, mounting upwards from Christian experience, whilst in defiance of the expression "Phenomenology of Christian Certainty" (p. 6) we get no sight of the growth of religious certainty and the Christian state of life. Thus the capital idea of God in the *System of Christian Truth*, upon which everything else depends, rests entirely upon the subjective consciousness of the new birth and conversion, and therefore solely upon a subjective foundation, which is simply transferred from the *System of Christian Certainty* in which, further, it has but a secondary position. But thus, also, all that is derived from the idea of God, that is to say, the whole *System of Christian Truth*, has but a subjective validity, which is not justified by saying that, of course, things must be so, if objective truth has a separate existence and reveals itself to us. That the two "Systems" of Frank do nothing towards filling up this gap is the more to be deplored that Frank cannot suppress a vivid consciousness of the fact that Dogmatics has to do with the apprehension of truth which has a separate existence (*Syst. d. christl. Wahrheit*, § 7, pp. 11, 18), and that he would have the positions of the second System recognised as truth having a separate existence. Moreover, Frank rightly allowed himself to be guided in his undertaking by the correct feeling that an inquiry into subjective faith ought to precede the System of Doctrine. Only this faith should be treated under its subjective-objective aspect (as even Beck professes to do).

consciousness, necessarily implies that the object and subject, although by no means identical, have, by virtue of a certain reciprocal and coincident homogeneity, come to a union in consciousness, whereby that experience which is associated with real certainty is verified.<sup>1</sup>

1. We have here to treat of the fundamental positions of the theory of knowledge, in order to present the features of that theory, and in order to participate in that high good of real certainty. All knowledge is concerned with certainty, and all faith that would be Christian is no less concerned therewith, a steadfast heart equally belonging to Christian virtue. Besides, certainty upon Christian ground has no wish to withdraw from those universal rules and laws, according to which a legitimate certainty is formed; were it otherwise, Christian Theology could be no longer represented as a branch in the series of human sciences. The general form in which certainty originates is the same in the natural (or universally human) sphere and in the Christian; it is the matter only which is different. Now, if Christianity, as we shall presently see more accurately, avows those universal rules, faith, which is struggling after certainty in order to be Christian, must submit to the same rules, and regard them in the light of a touchstone by which to decide which of the various possible relations to the Christian object corresponds with the demand of Christianity, as to form.

2. Certainty is the state in which the process of perception or apprehension comes to repose, to that limit which is at least provisionally appeasing. In the endeavour to arrive at certain knowledge, the concern is with a real object, which has not yet entered into the consciousness, or not in such a way that a knowledge is gained of its being apprehended, but upon whose entrance into the subject it depends whether the subject has perception of it as of a real object, or whether the object obtains an inner conscious mode of existence in the subject, yet without identification with the cognitive subject

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Trendelenburg, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 1862, ed. 2, vol. II. p. 489, etc.; Lotze, *Logik*, 1876; also Rothe, *Ethik*, ed. 2, introd. §§ 1-6. Chalybäus, *Philosophie und Christenthum*, 1853; Frank, *System d. christl. Gewissheit*, I. pp. 45-75; Biedermann, § 16; Kötlin, pp. 13-98, 101-115.

as such. There is an object in all real certainty, in all actual apprehension, external or internal; the same fact holds equally good for the self-consciousness, since even in that case consciousness has likewise divided into an object and a subject, into thinker and thought. The thinker as such is even in this case different to the thought, and the thought as such is not the thinker as such. For that reason Kant has been able to doubt the objective reality of the Ego, or to doubt that a real thing in itself corresponds to that which is thought in the self-consciousness, and as it is thought in the thinking Ego. It is true he has not got so far as to doubt about thinking itself, about the act of thinking; that would be a manifest contradiction; indeed, every doubt is itself a thinking. All thinking also, since it must, to be thinking, think something, has of necessity contents or an object; all consciousness is consciousness of something; a thinking with absolutely no contents would no longer be thinking, but would become extinct. Kant's doubt, therefore, does not deny that, in thinking, an Ego which is thought exists as a material of thought, but his doubt is whether in the thought itself an objective existence of the Ego represents itself to thinking. With the existence of contents, or of an object in consciousness, it is, of course, not granted that consciousness possesses certainty of its object. The object may also exist in consciousness as a form of phantasy, as a dubitable representation. The object only attains to certainty if it is apperceived or experienced as real by the subject, and if the subject has gained a knowledge of such apperception or experience, and of the reality of the object,—that is, if it is not mere thinking and consciousness of something real, but is also a knowledge of the consciousness, and that as something true. Consciousness also exists beyond the human sphere. Actual spirit is just that in which there is consciousness of consciousness, consciousness at the second power. Were we to accept Kant's doubt as to the reality of the Ego which is thought, self-consciousness itself would crumble to pieces, and all certainty about self or about anything else would fall away. But the spirit cannot lose all certainty so long as it is still actual spirit; a certainty belongs to the inalienable existence of the spirit. Absolute scepticism itself

has a certainty. It asserts that all the actual knowledge of mankind is a knowledge of phenomena; it also denies the possibility of knowledge. It thus affirms, in opposition to its own assertion, a knowledge, a certainty, namely of universal and necessary nescience. And that is only seemingly a pure negative. For there cannot be *absolute Scepticism* without measuring all actual and possible knowledge by the idea of knowledge, with which, as it opines, a congruence is impossible; and this idea of knowledge, which is itself a knowledge, it trusts; it has a conviction, though perhaps a misleading one, of its objective validity and truth, by which all pretended knowledge must consent to be measured. Thus absolute Scepticism is itself a witness for the fact that there is certainty, even if incomplete and misleading. If nothing could be any longer regarded as objectively true, there would, of course, be no certainty, but also no actual consciousness of consciousness (whether this contain a true testimony or not), therefore also no self-consciousness, and indeed no actual spirit; and thus knowledge would cease, and doubt too. So long as spirit actually exists, it has some sort of certainty, though it may certainly be true that it takes appearance for truth. Consequently, Kant's doubt in all certainty leads to the denial of spirit itself, and lends a helping hand, though reluctantly, to Materialism, as well as to a method of thought generally, according to which the apprehending activity of the spirit would equal zero, and all activity would consequently fall to the share of the object if such existed. *Materialism* proper gives a direct denial to spirit; it only knows matter, and the forces or activities of matter. It is either tardiness of thinking, and this is certainly not to be reached by science; one cannot constrain to thinking by thinking, if there is no desire to think; that would be a *petitio principii*. The cure for laziness can only lie in the will, in that desire for truth which belongs to the ethical sphere, and already includes an acknowledgment of the value of truth, and therefore transcends absolute scepticism. Or Materialism starts with the assumption of being a system of thought, and in fact the system of objective truth; it must then lay claim to certainty, conviction, universal validity, in short, to characters which only have a meaning if not

merely matter exists,—atomistic, disconnected individuality or chaos,—but spirit also. It thus lives by what it denies, and can certainly therefore not hinder an endeavour after certainty.

3. Real certainty can only arise by an interworking of the object of certainty and of the subject. To that end the first requisite is an activity of the subject. Certainty may have for its object something without or within, but it is always itself something within, though it be certainty of an object without or within. It is therefore impossible without an activity of the subject, by means of which its certainty becomes a fact. Certainty is a vital spiritual state in which the spirit finds itself in activity, in perceptive and adjudicating movement. Certainty does not exist, unless the spirit witnesses of the real object to the spirit. The point of view of *pure Empirism and Sensualism* is therefore erroneous, as is that of the false Mysticism which would fain lose itself in its object. Both think of the subject as purely passive, and attribute activity, or the manifestation of force, merely to the object, which works upon the subject in apprehension in a manner absolutely determinative. As far as Sensualism is concerned, it does not deny that the nature and action of the organs of sense form an essential co-efficient for the perceptions originating in objects; but it must also allow that we can only perceive according to forms of thought or categories which are necessary for us, and that without the employment of these categories, particularly without an activity of soul, whether it be called sensuous perception, sensation, or reflection, there would not be representations of sensuous things. Add to this what pure sensuous Empirism and Sensualism is unable to explain;—truths lie dormant in the human soul, which certainly cannot be derived solely from the senses, which once aroused within us (be it even by excitation from without) carry with them straightway the consciousness of universal validity and necessity, and therefore cannot arise from individual sensuous experiences alone. To that class belong the logical and mathematical laws, and also the ethical and æsthetical laws, in a word, the so-called eternal truths.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stuart Mill, indeed, has desired to derive even mathematical truths empirically; as, for example, that the radii of a circle are equal in magnitude; but at best only the expectation that a similar relation will be found to hold in a

But the same position, that mere passivity or an entrance of the object into the place of the subject cannot conduct to certainty, must also hold good for the knowledge and certainty of God and divine things. We cannot by ecstasy, by leisurely attendance upon divine exhortations, by passive self-absorption in the ocean of the divine infinitude, become master and sure of God. Were such an absolute absorption in Deity possible, it would simply be a re-absorption into a state of unconscious brooding.

But since, after what has been said, the activity of the subject is of such decided importance in the genesis of knowledge and of certainty generally, it is conceivable how, *in the second place*, others lean towards *Idealism*, which is also opposed to the true idea of knowledge. Since objects do not merely enter into us immediately as such, but only exist for us because of our representation or thinking, it is readily conceivable that doubt may be entertained of *the influence of objects* at all upon us or of *their existence*, and that the attempt may be made to build up purely from the spirit a knowledge allied with self-certainty. A beginning for such an attempt is already found in the systems of Malebranche, Leibnitz, and Berkeley, who collectively deny, if in different ways, the influence of objects upon our spirits, but who desire to cleave to a knowledge and certainty of objects (and in the case of Berkeley, at any rate, of spiritual substances) by referring them to divine action; Leibnitz referring them to his pre-established harmony, which is warranty for the congruity

new case as in an earlier, is empirically explained; no explanation is given of the impression of necessity and universality, which, before the close of the endless induction, and therefore *a priori*, mathematical truths make on the spirit as a rational thinking substance. And as a matter of fact also the endeavours, which are and will be made, to derive empirically all the ideas and laws of Logic, *Æsthetics*, and Ethics, must be frustrated. At the basis of them all there lies something *a priori*, which the thinking soul asserts and applies, and by means of which it is verified that in the process of knowledge and of certainty the soul is an independent factor, by no means merely passive and determined by the action of the world of sense or of the senses. Still less can it be said that the impressions of the senses produce or are knowledge by themselves and without the soul. They do not think themselves. One must therefore wonder how Lipsius (*Dogmat. Beiträge*, 1878, pp. 151, etc.) could attribute "fundamental" importance to the investigations of Alb. Lange (*Gesch. des Materialismus und logische Studien*), which endeavour to derive all certainty and all categories from the immediate evidence of the intuition of space.

of the order of thought with the order of objective existence; Malebranche and Berkeley referring them to a divine act or revelation within us which determines continuous knowledge. But since they all assume an influence of the object, which is God, and not merely His objective existence, but that also of other objects, it is in Fichte that we first see the consistent development of Idealism even to its extremest conclusions. An examination of Fichte will therefore most suitably delay us.

The Idealism of Fichte does not merely deny all influence to external objects, but also denies the existence of anything at all without us, which is not posited by the Ego.<sup>1</sup> Still he neither annuls the object of knowledge, nor its certainty. In contrast to such annihilation, he thinks he has the internal certainty at which he arrives, and which mere Empirism never attains and never verifies, by deducing everything from the Ego, even the external world, and thus surrounding the external world with the self-certainty of the Ego, since it is simply a positing of the Ego. According to Fichte, the power of the absolute production of the Non-Ego, that is to say, absolute freedom, belongs to the Ego. But the pretended absolute freedom of Fichte suffers from internal contradictions and shortcomings. We are conscious of not having posited ourselves;<sup>2</sup> a being posited precedes our positing (as Fichte himself cannot deny, and recognised subsequently), and this being posited does not originate in us. The Laws of Thought obtrude themselves upon the spirit; they are so little posited by the Ego at the outset, that the Ego is rather conscious that they are binding quite independently of itself. But also as regards the Non-Ego or the external world, certain as it is that its existence *relatively to ourselves* is conditioned by our own activity, it cannot possibly be a pure product of our freedom. For that we so represent or posit is not voluntarily brought about, but is forced upon us with some importunity. We are placed under the impression that we have not posited the impressions of the senses, but the activity which is called forth from us in the process

<sup>1</sup> [*Gesetzt*, originated, placed, constituted. *Posit* has, however, been adopted throughout this paragraph as the equivalent of *setzen*, in obedience to the lead of other familiarizers of Fichte.—Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> Schleiermacher, *Christlicher Glaube*, § 4.



is an involuntary response to influences we have experienced. But what is involuntary and unconscious is not the act of freedom; it is the work of nature dependent upon external data, "not self-positing." If this is denied, it must be maintained that the state of limitation, nay, the absence of consciousness, in which the subject first exists, is the act of the subject, a state of bondage self-incurred by means of a free act of renunciation,—that is to say, that absolute freedom demonstrates its existence by passing into bondage. But if it were said, by way of explanation of this contradiction,—the Ego itself *posits* the limits of the Non-Ego in order to demonstrate itself to be absolutely free, at least in endless progress, by virtue of its victory over these limits, or in order to perceive its freedom,—that reply would only land in another contradiction. For it is purposeless, an empty and unreasoning by-play, to posit, simply to abrogate. This recognition of the absent aim, or this aimlessness in Fichte's system, in which, nevertheless, so mighty an ethical energy pulsates, leads the way to more penetrative criticism. Fichte believes, it is true, that, in order to perfect knowledge and certainty, there is necessarily granted to the object no independent existence as contrasted with the Ego, but the object need only be treated as the positing of the Ego, in order never to lose its absolute self-evidence. But what is the consequence of such looking at home, of so convulsive a limitation of view, to avoid the loss of certainty? Nothing else than the absorption of all objectivity by the Ego; and in order to retain its self-evidence, a spite is entertained against all existence independent of the subject, and thus the Ego has certainty of nothing, knows nothing, and desires nothing, *but itself*. But at this point appear the relations between the ethical and the intellectual, and the law becomes evident that the latter has no existence apart from the former. It is essential to the ethical not to grudge to the object of action its independent existence (*sein Fürsichsein*); love finds its final purpose in another. If, now, knowledge, if certainty, desires to absorb the ethical, or else contemplates having and positing therein simply itself, the world of the ethical and that of apprehension would be in original eternal opposition. As the ethical does not inhere in the apprehensible, knowledge would not gain an enrich-

ment of certainty. But knowledge, after it has wholly abolished and wiped out the ethical as such, becomes itself impoverished, and the certainty, which must needs be no longer knowledge of an objective world existing independently of the Ego, becomes contracted and poor to the last degree, and finds its eternal *role* in knowing itself, in thinking upon itself. This is the intellectual correlate of Egoism. If this has been understood, it must also be conceded that knowledge and certainty can only attain to rich contents if the contents are not absorbed by the Ego, if the Ego would not know itself merely and retain a certainty of its own existence, that it is even theoretically of value as law: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake (that is to say, in this case, for the sake of objective truth) shall find it."<sup>1</sup> The conceit of absolute freedom and exclusive self-sufficiency are to be surrendered for objective truth, in order to gain knowledge and certainty in a higher form. The Ego, in order to attain knowledge and certainty, must not merely will to be active or productive, but must also bud into susceptibility for something besides itself, for the objective.<sup>2</sup> In thought which would become knowledge, the ethical principle, if it would reach the goal, must also embody itself (as must be asserted in opposition both to Materialism and to Idealism), and by virtue of that embodiment the spirit is ready to open itself to something outside itself which is not a mere determination of the Ego, and to allow itself to become determined in participation and in surrender, in order to exercise in turn a similar power of determining. Thus the ethical principle works in the intellectual process, in order to redeem the Ego from the narrowness and limitation of the abstract certainty of its own existence. From this there also follows yet another aspect of that Fichtian doctrine of the Non-Ego, which annuls its value as knowledge. If the Ego were conscious that the object was only its own positing, it must regard its positions as mere images of the phantasy, even though they are legitimately or necessarily produced, and a real ethical relation thereto would be impossible.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 25; according to Luke xvii. 33, *ζωογονήσω* (τὸν ψυχόν).

<sup>2</sup> So later even Fichte himself. Comp. Zeller, *Gesch. d. neueren Philos.* p. 631, etc. He long confounded the absolute and individual Ego.

4. Both views, if certainty and knowledge are to remain possible, are impossible attitudes, whether it be that of the exclusive action of the subject or that of the exclusive action of the object, whether it be Idealism or pure Empirism and Materialism, and no less if it be that Mysticism which reduces the subject to passivity. They all equally prevent the growth of any real certainty either of knowledge or faith.<sup>1</sup> But knowledge and certainty there will be, since absolute scepticism is self-contradictory. How, then, do knowledge and certainty arrive at a certainty of an object? In the two negative answers already given two positive propositions are included. Two things must be supposed if knowledge and certainty are to have an existence, a manifestation of power in the object, which tends to disclose the object, and a manifestation of power in the subject, which opens itself to receive the object. Both manifestations of power must meet in one point. It is in the self-consciousness, or in the Ego, that knowledge and certainty are engendered as by magical touch, for where there is coincidence there is also contact. That holds even of self-consciousness and its contents, to which, according to what has been said, *a priori* truths belong, although by no means as ideas already prepared. In the first place, the Ego must have become able to think of itself as object, which happens by the diremption of the spirit into the thinking person and the thing thought. Thus the Ego as the person thinking is susceptible of the taking up of the Ego as the object into thought, together with its contents, in order to attain a knowledge of itself and of its contents, that is to say, of the eternal truths of reason. Then, secondly, the spirit must also actually open itself as the *objective material* for the Ego as the thinking person, and show itself to it, or reveal itself as existent. Only by the blending of the results of the diremption of the thinking person and of the object of thought, do the inner light of self-consciousness and its contents catch fire. A creative power is supposed, the birth of an actual novelty, which previously had no existence; a portion of a new world based on the old is born

<sup>1</sup> In reference to the apprehension of God, it follows from what has been said that such apprehension would be initially impossible, if the unproven view were true, that God and the thinking spirit formed but a simple identity, or were absolutely separated and heterogeneous.

in every act of knowledge, as also happens with the world of action; and this birth, like that, also brings joy and life. Just as there is something mysterious in the birth of any new thing, there is also mystery in the point of coincidence of subject and object, out of which the new ray flashes, viz. the knowledge and the certainty in the subject upon the object; that so fruitful a coincidence is *possible*, and how it is so, it must be possible to say. The coincidence would be impossible, if subject and object were only an identity and not actually separate. In that case they could not possibly be known as separate. But coincidence would also be impossible, if subject and object were simply heterogeneous, quite disparate magnitudes. They must therefore, although distinct, have some relation or homogeneity for or with one another. In the first place, the *object* thought or to be thought must have a *homogeneity* with the thinking spirit. With reference to the things of the spiritual sphere, this follows as a matter of course; but it may also be said with regard to material and sensuous things and of the whole world, that a knowledge and a certainty of them can only be gained because of the fact that they are not repugnant to the spirit, but homogeneous with it in spite of their distinction. And that this is so may be easily seen. Not merely by virtue of the laws, upon which the material is dependent, but if we speak of matter itself, it is still a thought, it is therefore thinkable; it may be thought of as mass and material, or dynamically as a real complex of force; it has cognoscibility, and under both aspects a share, after its own fashion, of rationality. Only the purely irrational, the absolutely chaotic, is unthinkable, that is, is contradictory to thought;<sup>1</sup> it wants, therefore, the possibility of existence and of being thought to be true, and thus the possibility of being known, for a contradiction can only be thought of as opposed to knowledge, and incapable of ever becoming an element of knowledge. Secondly, the thinking *spirit* has a *homogeneity* with what is objective to it, with everything objective and spiritual besides; but the spirit has also a point of union with the material by virtue of the *a priori* forms of sensuous intuition (such as space and time), and by virtue of the organization of the senses, which are so

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher's *Dialektik*, §§ 114, 94, 95, 106, 122; Trendelenburg's *Log. Untersuchungen*, II. pp. 490, etc.

closely associated with the spirit in the unity of the person that it may be said that by means of that organization the spirit is "opened" to the external world, and possesses thereby, in spite of its material nature, its peculiar susceptibility to the real external world.<sup>1</sup> But for both—for sensuous apprehension and for the apprehension of spiritual and divine things—the same law which governs the constitution of our cognitive faculty generally will hold,—that cognition can only arise upon an actual, an experienced interworking of subject and object. On the subjective side the foundation will always be formed by the living receptivity or the act of reception; on the objective side, it will be formed by the manifestation of energy, which issues from the object upon the receiving subject and its modality or modificability. From the union of the two forces of reception and inworking or giving, comes the spark which kindles the light of knowledge and certainty. But because the receiver cannot be merely passive (no mental representation and thought being possible, unless *we* posit the object, that is, place or put it before us), the thing received comes to be thought of as the receiving and experiencing of an excitation to spiritual activity,—that is to say, in the first place, as a challenge to open oneself, or to surrender to the object presenting itself, in order to permit oneself to be determined thereby; and secondly, as an impulse to form from itself an image of the exciting object as an involuntary reflection in reaction or response, so to speak, to the determination received. Man is a microcosm, not in the sense that he is originally such in finished and complete form, but as a many-sided receptivity. Out of the stores of a receptivity enriched by excitation from existing things, from present contact with objectivity, he forms, by the very nature of the impulse, his representations, and thus is consciously and vitally in real relation with the whole world and with objectivity generally. In the intuition which falls to his lot in this representation, he seizes the objective existence actively present therein. At the same time, a certainty of fact and reality is given, though, of course, not yet of a necessity inherent in the same.

*Observation.* — Aristotle already taught a double faculty of cognition, a passive (or more accurately, a receptive)

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher's *Dialektik*, p. 59, §§ 113, 115.

intellect and a productive. The latter is the faculty of the apprehension of what is necessary in itself, but presupposes a corresponding experience as an excitation according to the principle: *Nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuerit in sensu* (sensuous or spiritual apperception).

5. But a distinction must be made between *immediate* and *mediate certainty* of the object of knowledge or of apprehension, as well as between *religious* and *scientific certainty*. Immediate certainty follows first from the perception of the so-called axiomatic truths, *i.e.* of thoughts which need only to be thought in order to give immediate evidence of themselves, and which then, by means of reflection, discursive thinking, may be further developed into indirect certainty, and made fruitful. Then immediate certainty also succeeds experience, succeeds internal or external intuition. Further, certainty need not extend merely to the moment of contact with the object, and to the immediate effect of that contact, namely, that affection by means of which the subject possesses an immediate and overpowering perception of the object just so long as contact lasts. In the intuition (which does not, of course, arise without the co-operation of the subject, but by the aid of an involuntary co-operation due to the active presence of the object), and in the accompanying perception, duration is wanting, as well as that clearness of consciousness respecting what the subject really has in the object experienced. It is therefore of importance that, in addition to this immediate certainty or intuition, there should be a faculty of careful attention to intuition, a co-operative faculty. Upon the overmastering impression of the object experienced, there arises a reaction of the subject, by means of which it fixes and places over against itself as a kind of object the experience or intuition to which it has surrendered itself, in order to become conscious of the subject-matter in a spiritual, strong, and minute manner, and at the same time to retain and co-operate with all the advantage of the immediate impression. By reflection the spirit forms upon the experience once made and preserved in the memory, or upon the intuition to which it has surrendered itself, an intellectual or mental image of the thing experienced, which has a capacity of continuance

apart from the continuance of contact or of the subjective affection; and this process of reflection, although it is now *mediate*, may partake of that original certainty. A more minute exposition is not called for here as to how the consciousness reflecting upon experiences, and upon the intuitions or representations thus originating, regulates their abundance, passes into that judgment which separates things similar from things different, comprehends them in one thought altogether remote from the empirical representations or perceptions, and thus advances to ideas according to laws which are innate in the reason. Possessing thus as we do different ideas, these may be classified in their turn, may be systematized or comprehended in a higher unity, which may at the same time become more fruitful, and not of necessity simply more abstract. Indeed, whilst sensuous perception as such occupies itself solely with individualities, although it is able to grasp these individualities in a most lively manner, and whilst the formation of ideas by the understanding is directed solely towards the general truths which are deduced from those individualities, and merely form a more or less abstract scheme, it is the part of the combining reason to behold in one view particular and general, to see the individual in its vital connection with the conditioning and confirmatory whole, to see in the individual the realization of the universal. This may be called the intellectual intuition, without which we stop either at sensuous empiricism or empty ideas merely, but with which we possess for the first time a true and rational knowledge. Intellectual intuition in this sense is not merely a gift for Sunday-children,<sup>1</sup> but a problem for rational thinkers generally, and therefore in many ways maintained by the most cautious thinkers.<sup>2</sup> It may be vague in idea at the commencement, but is susceptible of analysis and rational elaboration. Again, starting thence, thought may proceed, according to innate laws, to consequences and inferences, which, if they are legitimate, again produce the consciousness of certainty, and thus enlarge the sphere of knowledge and of certainty far beyond the sphere of that contact which implies the immediate presence of the

<sup>1</sup> [A child born on a Sunday, and vulgarly supposed from that circumstance to be endowed with exceptional faculties.—Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher, *Dialektik*, §§ 115, 129, etc.; H. Ritter in his *Paradoxa*; also comp. Beck, *Propäd.* pp. 35–39; Köstlin, pp. 99–103.

object, and its manifestation of energy upon or in the subject. Still it is especially to be borne in mind that that living contact with the object, which is included in the spiritual regard, remains the *responsible foundation* for the whole process of discursive thought. If that contact were only apparent, or if the affection with its precise contents had not passed over faithfully and completely into the spiritual intuition, all the consequences deduced from this foundation would be incorrect, or would fail to be in conformity with truth. The inferences, though formed with logical correctness, can only enrich knowledge when and in so far as that knowledge corresponds with the fundamental perceptions or experiences. Besides, since many errors may insinuate themselves into the judgments formed, and into the formation of ideas, it is clear that the multiplication of knowledge by reflection or discursive thinking is surrounded by dangers, which call for the greatest scientific accuracy; and however necessary the advance may be to reflective thinking, there must be no exclusive occupation with reflection. On the contrary, faithful labour amongst particulars, when it has embraced and elaborated a circle of experiences, can and also will, especially if these particulars are regarded in association, be rewarded by new immediate intuitions, opening up as if by a flash of light which brings order and harmony into the accumulated multiplicity of things and ideas, united with the certainty that we have seen into the very heart of the things in such a flash, at least on one side. Susceptibility for such a glance may be produced by these labours of discursive thinking; that glance embraces the fresh force of immediate certainty, and is itself a renewed contact of a higher order with the matter of thought, thus approving itself the key to earlier problems left unsolved. Especially in the religious sphere, where God is the object and the soul the subject, will immediate contact by virtue of the wealth of this sphere repeat itself at ever higher stages, so that by means of the interposition of the earlier spiritual activity and the developed nature of the soul on the one hand, and by stimulative experiences on the other, new enlightenment respecting God and the world can always multiply. "To him that hath, shall be given." There is, indeed, a great difference between *religious* and *scientific* certainty. Religious certainty



is an immediate certainty; scientific certainty has arisen withal by means of reflection or discursive thinking, although it has to return to axioms, to self-evident truths, which, instead of being proved, prove themselves, and especially has to knit itself to eternal truths. Whilst in the apprehension of finite things immediate intuition or contact cannot be renewed at every moment, because that would require their perpetual presence, it is otherwise with religion. God being omnipresent, contact with Him may be sought at any moment in prayer and contemplation; indeed, it will always be true that we live and move and have our being in Him as the perennial and omnipresent source of our existence. That which has been obtained in creative moments by conscious contact with God, by divine experience and enlightenment, can and will subsequently become a matter of reflective elaboration with a view to substantiating it in our consciousness, just as, according to what has been previously said, the general process of knowledge is to be depicted. But, impossible as it is in sensuous apprehension, by virtue of the divine omnipresence and the essential destination of man for a continuous religious life, it is possible that the life in God, and the immediate certainty which arises out of the contact of the object and the subject, should continue and should vindicate themselves in mediate thinking upon God and divine things. For where devotion and prayer in the narrower sense do not occupy the moment, the spirit of prayer may control. Thus it is conceivable how, in the sphere of religion, a far higher degree of certainty is possible even for the scientific consciousness of the contents of religious experiences than is possible in that of finite knowledge. So strong is religious certainty, that the pious man finds himself able to die for his conviction. Discursive, clear, and precise thought, nevertheless, in relation to religion becomes neither superfluous nor impossible, because of the accompanying religious certainty. But the correct course of discursive thinking, as well as the logical character of the method pursued, is the more surely established by the fact that immediate religious certainty always confirms the truth of the result a second time. Where this confirmation is wanting to the religious consciousness, where the consciousness refuses its assent, there lies in the very fact a challenge for discursive thought to prove whether the process has been conducted

correctly,—whether it is not the case that what was given in religious experience and enlightenment has been incompletely received and elaborated in the discursive process, or that something false has become intermixed, quite apart from the possible logical errors in the forms of judgments, ideas, inferences. Such firm control and defence against errors, natural science does not possess in reference to its ever needful hypotheses; on the other hand, natural science certainly has the advantage in this respect, that, in religious matters, the purity and wealth of religious experience depend to an unlimited extent upon human freedom and its normal use; whilst, in reference to finite things, perception and progress in knowledge depend far less upon the moral elevation of the subject and upon individuality. The world is far more obvious than God to the perception of all men, without reference either to their moral or religious position; the one question in natural science is the difference of intellectual force and culture, a difference which has its importance in the sphere of religious knowledge.

6. *Compass of Certainty*.—If we survey, after all that has been said, the certainty of the subject or the Ego, i.e. the self-consciousness, in relation to the consciousness of God and of the world, the following assertion is justified. There is not only a certainty of the self-consciousness, but the Ego may also attain certainty upon external things, and, above all, may attain immediate certainty by contact with the object, which elicits its image from us, or radiates impressions upon us, which become known to us as signs conveying objective truth, known as the effect of objective power,—impressions out of the critical and correct comprehension and appreciation of which there is built up within us, now the science of a real and finite world, and now the knowledge of the real and divine world. The former is possible, because one side of our nature is directed towards the world: by virtue of our corporeal organization, as well as of our psychical dowry of *a priori* forms and laws. The latter is possible, since and so far as we have a side of our nature directed towards the divine, to which there is also appended the most highly influential ethical dowry of man. Between these two kinds of contact, or between the sensuous and internal contact (particularly religious experience or immediacy), together with the certainty peculiar to each, so

great an analogy exists that it is readily to be accounted for, if Jacobi, and afterwards Fichte and Rothe, following the example of Clement of Alexandria, call both kinds *faith*. In both a trust and certainty exist, with the additional consciousness that this certainty is produced by the object presented and not by ourselves, although by means of our perception throughout; of both it holds good that *fides præcedit intellectum*. But in the certainty of merely finite things, if there is any truth in religion, no demand is made upon the innermost core of the individual personality, but only upon that human essence which is the same in all. A certainty of finite things may exist where this core is quite undeveloped, and where, therefore, certainty is not concerned with the innermost essence, but where conviction has only seized, so to speak, the outer man, the generic man which he shares with his kind, in which case also the existence of the world has not been recognised in its rational necessity, but is only known as a matter of fact. Hence it is clearly comprehensible why religious certainty can alone have full intensity, indeed, why the last guarantee for all other certainty is to be sought in religion. Inasmuch as God is the absolute cause of all existence and consciousness, the pious man possesses in God alone the rock of all certainty. Therefore the apostle does not point to his self-consciousness, but to the fact of his being known and loved of God as the ultimate foundation of his safety and assurance. Such divine knowledge and love of us is withal an actual fact which implants knowledge within us. Thus the consciousness of God alone is the true fastness of our self-consciousness. God is nearer to our true self, if it has come into birth, than that true self is to our empirical and generic personality, our outer man; and no less also the certainty of finite things and their reality outside of us only then becomes quite firm and impregnable, when the consciousness of the world becomes interwoven with God, and is, so to speak, ratified in Him. For, since it is only in the God-conscious man that the innermost personality comes to light, in like manner, by means of that interweaving of the consciousness of God and of the world, the world is viewed in God (*sub specie æternitatis*), and the certainty of the world first obtains its absolute security for the spirit; at the same time, the attestation to its rationality is given so far as that

certainly has its verification in the highest reason. That happens when the validity of the consciousness of God is also established by the contemplation of the world, and the certainty of the God-consciousness is transfused into the world-consciousness.

*Observation.*—If the religious certainty of the individual personality is regarded as the highest, this does not imply that the process of human development generally ends with the individual. No loose relation to the community is thus implied. All that is meant is that certainty in its perfection is something so individual and personal, that the community and its knowledge or its consciousness continued in us cannot replace religious certainty, but simply belongs to finite consciousness, whilst religion has primarily to do with the certainty of God.<sup>1</sup>

7. This leads us to the *relation of the certainty of the subject to the generic consciousness*. By means of the generic consciousness, the compass of our certainty is also widened and enriched, and that, too, without any detriment to our self-certainty; for the generic consciousness, like our bodily organization, is one side of ourselves, and therefore implants within us quite naturally a certainty of things, which others have experienced by immediate impress; it is also continually about us, according as we have full trust in others, or as we recognise ourselves to be so in harmony with them that they seem to us simply our enlarged selves. If we are conscious of placing full trust in them, we have, so to speak, an enlarged organ for becoming certain of those things which are remote from our empirical perception. In this sense, again, we must live at every step by faith, which is certainly a different thing from religious faith; and an individual who would put no trust

<sup>1</sup> We therefore coincide with Ehrenfeuchter when he says, in his *Praktische Theologie*, I. 23: "Religion appears quite an individual thing in every man; religious experiences oppose every attempt at transference to others, and at measurement by the rule of others; but at the same time religion contains a core the most deep and original, and therefore also similar and alike in all." He means: the same good for all determined by their natural disposition. If only our individual personality has become immediately conscious of God as the Father, we also know that all men are called to the filial relationship. Religion is the deepest and strongest bond for individuals and peoples. Rightly also says Fichte, *System der Ethik*, II. 1, 26: "In the sentiment of God, since God is the most universal existence, all dispositions and all spiritual individualities meet and harmonize."

in others, and who would never place confidence in generic faith, could not exist in human society; he would be a separatist, and unmoral, losing, as far as he was concerned, all the bonds of human fellowship. If nothing were received but what had been actually seen or experienced, an utter impoverishment would result, and it would be no longer possible to deal with one another in society. Indeed, one's own moral life, being estranged from society, must of necessity become unmoored. It is therefore wisely ordered that everybody else should be able to perceive, and see, and hear for us. A substitute for individual perception is made by the race. And this power of the race to implant in us a certainty of things which is of course mediate, when personal experience and perception is unattainable, has its importance not merely in the sphere of finite things like Cosmology, but also in the peculiarly spiritual sphere, and especially the ethical and religious. The race coins moral sentiments, originally held perhaps by prominent individuals, into customs and usages, which surround the new individual just entering into the community, not without exercising an influence upon him, and, so far as he possesses an unbroken trust in the community, not without implanting within him a kind of certainty that what custom would have is right and good, and therefore moral. And quite the same thing happens in the religious sphere with doctrines and usages, which are the precipitate of the religious consciousness of mighty men and times. Further, since every religion has a holy tradition, be it myth or history, this generic co-operation is indispensable for the preservation of the religion, and that the more, the more the historic forms an integral moment in a form of faith (as is the case in Christianity, § 3). Finally, personal faith preserves itself in this way; it proves itself to be a power for forming communities, and presents itself as the faith of a circle, thus giving a kind of ratification of itself, namely, the proof that it is not merely an individual idiosyncrasy. But, of course, the religious and moral sphere puts some limit to the might and the right of the race, and to the simply generic relation of the individual to certainty, as we shall soon see more at large.

§ 5.—*Stages of the Certainty of Faith.*

In order to see how that religious certainty of Christianity is attained, which is the necessary presupposition in scientific certainty, the incomplete stages and false forms of the former must be first surveyed and traversed, until that stage of religious certainty is reached at which both strength as well as impulse may be applied to the acquisition of scientific (theological) certainty. Now, since (§ 3) the object, that is to say, Christianity, claims to have different sides, the historical and the ideal, there are three principal conceptions of Christianity possible, and by each of these the mode of the subjective religious attitude towards Christianity, relatively to the nature of FAITH, is determined. The main importance may be attached to the historical or to the ideal aspect, or finally, both factors may be thought of and appropriated as internally united and interlinked.

1. If the main importance is attached by the subject to the *historical* side of Christianity, the certainty of Christianity will always be identified with the certainty or trustworthiness of the historical sources which testify of the contents. Nevertheless, an important difference may arise, according as the sources of information are found in a living, contemporaneous, oral testimony, or in documents which belong to the time of the establishment of Christianity, or actually form a part of that establishment by virtue of their witness to Christ.

2. But the subject may also cleave one-sidedly to the *ideal* side of Christianity, or regard a mere ideal as the peculiar and eternal essence of Christianity, in the hope of attaining by that means to a more intensive and inward certainty than belongs to mere historic faith. Here, also, different attitudes are possible of the subject who longs for certainty in religious matters.

3. The transition from one form or stage of faith, however necessary, is associated with inward struggle and pain. This is peculiarly the case in the transition to true and personal religious certainty. Then it is vital to avoid seductive by-paths on either hand; then the deepest-seated doubts, which

bring not merely the intellectual life, but the whole man into conflict, must be vanquished ; but then, also, Christianity offers, provided the subject occupies the fitting relationship towards it, the highest possible reward at the close of the conflict.

4. A theology, or attempts at scientific verification, may annex itself to incomplete stages of religious certainty or of faith, indeed they may seek to hide thereby the sense of the incompleteness of their standpoint. But the final stage, which most completely conforms to the universal laws of the growth of certainty (§ 4), and the contents of which correspond most exactly with the central point of Christianity (§ 3), first renders possible a true scientific certainty on the basis of an existing and true religious certainty.

## FIRST SUBDIVISION.

### RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY AT THE STAGE OF MERE HISTORIC FAITH.

#### FIRST ARTICLE.

##### § 6.—*Generic Certainty, or Certainty the Foundation of which is the common Faith of the Church.*

When Christianity has laid hold of families or whole peoples, the common faith shaped by the faith of the first believers naturally passes as a tradition to succeeding generations, who, by virtue of the authority of the earlier professors, are impelled to the acceptance of this tradition with some sureness. This acceptance, which relies upon the common faith of the Church, has, it is true, its wholesome effects, but the inward religious personality is not thereby brought to light, indeed, this attitude of authority may even work detrimentally. This happens if the tradition in its natural growth picks up impure elements, and especially if it takes a direction which, so far from advancing the individual religious personality, lulls or stifles it. Should this be the case, and should

the factor of subjectivity nevertheless become substituted for a mere generic relation to religion, an internal breach with tradition, and with the community held together by tradition, is thus prepared, unless the community purifies itself from the impure objective elements, the acceptance of which is attributed to it, and unless it ceases to demand submission to the impure as to that which is certain. The conflict thus commenced cannot be averted by endeavouring to hide the defects of this stage by scientific means, but may lead to secession from Christianity altogether. The normal Christian course of this conflict is, that there is a severance from the perverse elements, from the muddy wells of tradition, and a return to the primitive faith, at the risk of temporary loss to the existing ecclesiastical community, whilst the Church is itself measured by the original records of Christianity, which must be held by the Church axiomatically in honour, so long as the Church remains a Church.

1. The importance of authority. Christianity nowhere grows out of humanity of itself. No one can become a Christian purely by his own act, but the first thing must be the presence of Christianity, and that proffer which is an act of Christianity, by its being strewn as seed in the word of promulgation, and attaching itself to our receptivity (comp. § 4). That proffer was in the first place made by Christ as the great sower; it is made again and again by the Christian religion by the instrumentality of the Church, the very faith of which will not allow the simple presentation of Christianity generally to human choice to cease, but demands the vindication of Christianity as something which has inward justification for claiming authority. The Church demands, as a missionary and catechizing agency for the education of nations, that its word should not be questioned; it pronounces it to be a duty to believe both it and its message; it demands the obedience of faith to its *κήρυγμα* (Rom. i. 5); it is thus, and only thus, able to be a witness and external authority



which prepares the way for Christianity. It must not be regarded as a pathway for personal ambition. It must bring that love into exercise which seeks the highest good of man. The law of faith (Rom. iii. 27, vi. 2), which Christianity announces as obligatory, is to be looked upon as no dead *γράφμα*; esteem for it and obedience to its command by those who are still minors, is to be regarded as no dead work, no slavish obedience; everything is completely normal when the Church requires obedience from minors, inasmuch as in requiring obedience to itself it requires it for the gospel it announces, and finds in the gospel the sole justification of its demand. And therefore it is neither blameworthy nor a matter of indifference, rather is it deserving of praise, that those who are still minors as regards the higher and riper spiritual stage, should repose their confidence in things upon which a personal and valid judgment has not been formed. To the word of those who occupy a parental or tutorial position, minors, either amongst individuals or peoples, owe that piety in which the morality and virtue of the age of minority is concentrated. Upon the morality of this authoritative relation all education rests, as well as the moral admissibility of a national Christianity. Further, Christian truth, when brought near by the witness and authority of the Church, is able quite early to exercise a power at once so attractive and so compelling, that its hearers come forthwith beneath the action of that truth. The Church proceeds in its mission with a better conscience, and does not hesitate to bring the earliest and most lasting impressions of the child's soul to bear upon the formation of good prepossessions, inasmuch as it is conscious of an essential relation in Christianity to all souls (Col. i. 15, etc.), and must be so conscious, since, in accordance with Tertullian's saying about the *anima naturaliter christiana*, nonage itself already shows an affinitative bias towards that religion, which, when it is laid before the eye of the youthful soul, awakens a presentiment of a higher world of peace and joy. Authority, even external authority, which rests its claims upon its trustworthiness and honesty, has a good, a moral, and a primitive right to existence; and where it works normally, it is not a mere tyrannous and menacing power, but an inward power which works within; it has, as G. Calixt says, a *dulcis et suavis influxus* upon the

feelings; it does honour to its name, *auctoritas*, coming from *augere*, and pointing therefore to a multiplication and not a diminution of existence and of the spiritual life.<sup>1</sup>

*Observation.*—By virtue of this normal relation and its psychical grounds, a religion may pass with a certain natural certainty from one generation to another, as we perceive, indeed, that children rest with confidence in the faith of their parents. So, too, the transmittal of national churches rests securely upon the fact that religious tradition exercises, to start with, a sure and determinative influence in the family.

2. But certain as it is that this attitude of the subject to the authority which transmits Christianity is a good and necessary commencement, and that agreement cannot be permitted with those who postpone the commencement of the work of Christianizing to a later stage of spirit-life, in order that an involuntary preoccupation may not intervene that would render examination and free appropriation or choice difficult, it is just as certain that this stage of authority must not be final. The very essence of Christianity prohibits that most surely, though this stage—which has its necessary place in all religious communities—may bring blessing by habituating to *obedience*, and therefore to *self-denial*, by wholesome impressions of the object received from the community, and by presentiments of the intrinsic worth of the matter presented, which has a power of culture and captivation. Every Church which remains Christian, places the figure of Christ before the eyes of men. For all that, it may also happen that the community cleaves to that commencement and hinders advance, or that spiritual laziness regards the starting-point as the goal, and will not move forward. Each of these errors is wont to evoke the other. This is, of course, only possible when a mere superficial conception, acceptance, and appropriation of the Christian contents are regarded as final,—when there is such a conception as that the decisions of the Church, not because they are true, but because they are ecclesiastically sanctioned, are to be accredited as the norm by which religious things are to be thought of or treated, this appropriation of authority—in other words, obedience to the Church—being regarded as the true Christian piety. Christianity thus becomes a *Law* simply,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. A. von Oettingen, *Die Auctorität*, 1878.

a law of doctrine or a law of life. To the former view the Greek Church most inclines, and to the latter the Romish. But in this case manifestly that which constitutes the central point of Christianity has not obtained its rights. A position has not yet been taken up within this central point; but lines of conjunction are drawn towards it by the proper arbitrating authority, the law-giving Church. Even the indolent religious subject, who has no internal experience of the truth of Christianity and of the living God, may also submit to the law which the Church proclaims. Thus religious faith and its certainty becomes something secondary; the Church simply requires performances, works of obedience, of an intellectual or moral kind. But *at the same time, also*, since no experience of God is sought for, the human authority, which possesses legislative power for faith and life, is actually put in place of God. An external relation alone to God will thus exist, transmitted by the Church, which also has the right of regulating under divine sanction what appears to it good and true, without insisting that a further personal certainty should be arrived at of the ecclesiastical doctrine as truth. At the same time, the Church necessarily holds a higher position than that of being the proclaimer and witness of Christianity—that of the ultimate source and authority for truth. If the Church were also to keep the *aim* clearly before it in its proclamation, that the subject should also become conscious of the *inner truth* of its message, the danger of relapse to the merely legal stage would be restrained. But *the temptation is great*, parallel with the religious indolence of individuals, for the Church to acquire another conception of its own nature. It is possible for it to advance to the acceptance of the comfortable and paralyzing opinion that it is endowed with infallibility in the exercise of its function as instructor; it is possible for it to regard this endowment as necessary, in order to the preservation of the authority and cognizability of Christian truth, and thus that it should be obeyed as the vicar of God, or as God. But this once announced as an axiom, it must react upon the community in this way, that the subject may now the more easily think to demonstrate his obedience to God by his obedience to the Church, its dogmas, and its morality, and to possess in that way true Christianity. This has happened, if

under different forms, in both the Greek and Romish communions. But the *Evangelical* Churches are not safe from that danger. The opposition to the temporary influence of subjectivism has also evoked actual manifestations of this spirit, and that in proportion to the power exercised within them by doctrinal tradition. But at the stage of a faith which is merely ecclesiastical, the subject always allows himself to be content to be united with the Church or its works, ideas, and regulations, and therefore with men in the supposition *that God and Christ do not desire an immediate relation with individuals*, but only a mediate relation by means of the Church as their vicar, to the words of which the understanding and will should be subject, instead of seeking for a personal and immediate communion with God in Christ. The Church should indeed combat this relegation of God and Christ to an inferior place, which may so easily grow into a confusion of the Church with Christ and His authority, and, according to the figure of the Baptist, should accept the position of the friend of the bridegroom (John iii. 30), who is willing to decrease that He may increase. But it may also adhere to the indistinguishable nature of its authority and the divine; it may even insist on the absence of difference, it may enjoin the non-advance to higher certainty as a duty, from *fear of a false freedom* and from the danger of minority in the subject, from *unbelief* in the real communion of God and His Spirit with believers, and in the confirmatory power of that communion, — in fact, from self-sufficiency. Thus it may come to pass that it presents itself as the basis of all truth, and presents the duty of unconditional obedience to itself as the highest duty; consequently, the very belief in God is to be held on its authority. But, at the same time, the work of Christianity upon the heart of man is interrupted, the means are regarded as the end, the road as the goal; that which should lead to the Mediator becomes a new mediator which hinders access to the liberating Christ. It is therefore easy to see what fate will befall certainty in this case; personal religious certainty of the contents of Christianity *as truth* will not be afforded. For the truth of the Church's word is only placed upon infallible authority, which is its own trumpeter and witness; but truth does not attain to certainty by mere submission to assertion, especially considering that into ecclesi-

astical tradition the unstable and even the impure enters beyond all question. From what is contradictory and untrue no certainty *can* come, as it comes from truth; on the contrary, the sense of truth, which is never completely extinguished, produces an opposite reaction.—To sum up, at the standpoint of mere church authority it is impossible to arrive at any immediate contact with the religious object; but only at a contact derived from confidence in the testimony of the Church, not at an experience of religious certainty resting upon the internal force and truth of Christianity. This certainty is therefore formally incomplete, since it does not emanate from the object itself, but from the authority of the Church, which is assumed, not established. Besides, from the material point of view, the *ideal side* of Christianity—according to which it is eternal, living, and self-evidencing truth, and not merely a history or statement of doctrines and precepts which is obsolete—is hidden under a bushel.

3. What, then, is the relation to *scientific certainty* at this stage? The endeavour to verify cannot be absent. Humanity *cannot* remain at the stage of mere minority, in which the subject, full of trust and self-denying piety, depends upon the voice of the Church alone. Rather the universal human consciousness impels to reflection, to *questions as to grounds and causes*, as Christianity itself imparts an impetus to become conscious not only of what, but *why* we believe (§ 1). Out of the younger generation comes the older, which is followed in its turn by a younger, excelling in acumen; and the riper has to ask the reason of the hope which is in us. Finally, the intellect within and without the Church is not wanting in *attacks and doubts*, which entangle the subject in harassing struggles between love of truth and piety. All these circumstances expel the directness of child-like piety towards the Church; and in order to re-establish validity in the consciousness, an endeavour may now be made to screen or else to satisfy by means of scientific reflection the want of a genuine religious certainty which belongs to this stage.

What scientific verification is possible at this stage? The verification which nonage has in authority cannot suffice. This authority is a necessity of nature,—for a time; it does not verify the truth of that which it maintains. Heathen and

Mohammedan parents make use of a similar authority over minors to compel the acceptance of their religious conceptions. What the simply authoritative Church asserts concerning itself, and what it has to verify, is this, that the position of highest final and accessible authority is due to it,—indeed, that it actually is that sensible and present divine authority, which is not only a witness for revelation, but is itself, by virtue of its authority, a perennial revelation and attestation of all truth. Now, how is this claim to be verified?—that is the question. Why should we believe in the Church? That would clearly be the best reply if the Church would or could say: the Church is to be believed, because and in so far as every one can surely experience that it speaks the truth, the appropriation of its teaching being rewarded by an unconditional certainty of the internal truth of that teaching. But to speak thus is a thing incompetent at the stage we are treating. In such a case the subject would have perceived of itself the internal truth of what it believed, and would be permeated by that truth, and would even have gained by virtue of that knowledge an independent and secure standpoint apart from the Church. Of that the Romish Church stands in fear. He who has convinced himself of the internal truth of Christianity manifestly occupies a higher and a freer position in relation to the Church, because he no longer needs the authority of the Church in order to believe in Christ, but is already united to Christ by the certainty that the truth is in Christ. In this case measurement of the Church by Christian truth must be permissible. So it comes about that the Church will not allow the subject to attain an independence which might possibly turn to its own disadvantage in matters which contradict that individual certainty. But does the Church then somehow promise that there is an inward and a divine certainty of its being the infallible source of all truth, and that it can impart such certainty? Even that it does not teach; even that it does not dare to affirm. Does it remain in this state then, peradventure, that to the question why all its assertions are to be believed, its only reply is, because it is infallible; but to the question why its infallibility is to be believed, the answer runs, because it says so? In short, is this the opinion advanced, that all its doctrines or assertions are to be believed on this ground, only that they are its assertions? That would

really be to demand a blind faith. Instead of verification, the Church would simply repeat its assertion. The demand for implicit faith is, it is true, not seldom to be met with; but, nevertheless, the Church is unwilling to say, in so many words, it knows nothing to advance by way of verification, it is unable to speak in its own defence. Abbé Bautain of Strasburg was condemned by the Pope because he maintained a blind faith in the Church to be the fundamental demand of Catholicism. Therefore Catholic theologians like von Drey and Dieringer have hankered after a science which should substantiate the principles of Systematic Theology, in order not to be shut up to a mere faith in the testimony of the Church. Thus Dieringer teaches: "The Christian desires, and should desire, to become personally assured of the inner truth of Christianity."<sup>1</sup> To that end he prefaces his inquiry with a *Theory of Revelation*.<sup>2</sup> Thus the point to be proved is again presupposed and postulated. The demand, for example, is made, to start with, that everything should be surrendered which contradicts dogma or tradition; that the speculative process ought only to operate by shutting itself up to Dogma and Tradition, which are therefore self-evident and require no proof, so that the verifying process can have no reference to the authority of dogma. The decisive element still rests upon the *moral* demand of piety to the Church, of trust that it cannot err, when it exalts its words to the high position of being unconditioned and divine. That is to subordinate the religious duty to God to the presumed moral duty to the Church, for the demand is made for faith and conscience to submit themselves even to what is impure in tradition. A bolder statement was made by Hermes and his school, which was not liable to this charge of *petitio principii*. The reason apprehends of itself and seizes certain fundamental truths, especially of a moral kind (in which doctrine he followed Kant). But the same reason knows its own limits, and may become self-convinced that it must accept, in reference to this sphere which lies beyond its limits, and which, nevertheless, has some relations with it, the foundation afforded by the divine authority of the Church. Thus reason is compelled by its own constitution, and therefore voluntarily, to recognise ecclesiastical authority; therefore faith in such authority is

<sup>1</sup> *Katholische Dogmatik*, 4th edit. 1858, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 14, 15.

well-grounded. But even Hermesianism has been condemned by the Pope. For the fear was, lest, if the recognition of ecclesiastical authority was made dependent upon the strength of rational proof, the possible opposition of reason must also be submitted to. And, indeed, the standpoint of Catholic faith, as a faith in authority, does not brook that this authority should be derived from or verified by any truth independent of the Church or superior to the Church. But ought God or the utterance of religious faith and conscience to be this higher evidential truth? But how God is to be thought, and what faith and conscience have to comprehend, is, conversely, said to depend upon the infallible Church. The Romish Church, being what it is, can never make itself dependent upon anything outside of itself, upon anything higher and more certain than itself; for its fundamental dogma will always be itself, although its standpoint agrees with the persuasion that whatever the Church wishes and teaches is in itself good, even though it be not cognizable as true and good. Further, it appeals for the verification of its claims, with evident pleasure, to its age and its uniformity, to its martyrs, or to its majority,—reasons which are partly unconvincing and partly questionable, having in the course of centuries so very largely changed in dogma. But even granting that these reasons possessed the weight of probability, the Church cannot, properly speaking, desire to buttress its authority with them, because these reasons always need to be submitted to a free inquiry; and thus, finally, the question always remains in the following state: upon the question as to why the infallibility of the Church is to be believed, the only answer remaining is,—because the Church demands it, and asserts its own infallibility. — If, now, there arises within the Catholic Church the feeling of the insecurity of its basis,—inasmuch as it will not have to do either with blind faith, or a faith based upon reason, or a faith to which the inner self-evidencing power of truth is the decisive thing,—an insight also arises into the weakness of the proofs, which ought to come to the help of its divine authority (for example, an insight into the fact that the Church is nowhere promised that truth shall remain with the majority); there arises the apprehension lest, by means of this absolute height to which the Church is raised, what is human may be



taken for what is divine (credulity, *Aberglaube*), and, as a consequence, the divine be lightly esteemed or regarded as human (unbelief, *Unglaube*); thus the Romish Church cannot help forward the seeker after truth and certainty, but can only forbid doubt in its authority as *sin*. Of itself, by virtue of what it is and what it gives itself out to be, it is unable to direct towards a higher form of the appropriation of truth, able to cope with doubt, and independent of mere human authority; it is only able to exercise repression over Christendom as it struggles to rise from minority to full age. *But since the Church so inextricably involves the contents of Christianity in itself and its claims that no one, it is affirmed, can have Christian truth without recognising those claims at the outset, the natural consequence, as frequent as it is melancholy, is that those who are unable to return to the position of minors reject the Christian contents as well as the authority of the Church, either openly, as is seen especially and to a frightful extent in the Romance nations in great popular crises, or silently and in the heart, where, consequently, disease eats its way like a cancer, deeper and deeper, and a retrograde movement commences, which advances step by step to ultimate Atheism and Materialism.*

Unless the Romish Church wishes to befriend the Reformation, it cannot base either its authority or its dogma upon the self-evidencing power of truth; the decisive foundation of all authenticity must be, as it is, the formal authority of the Church, and this, too, must be valid without proof. Immediately it teaches that anything is to be accepted on the score of its internal truth, everything may be submitted to the process of proof by its self-evidencing power to heart and spirit, and even its very assertions as to its own function may be inquired into and criticized,—which would derange its whole standpoint. He who recognised the Church by virtue of its internal truth, would have, at the same time, attained an independence apart from the Church, and this independence would no longer award the highest place to ecclesiastical authority, but to the divine might of truth. The Church would become the mere witness of truth, but would not possess the right of affixing the stamp of truth upon whatever it taught. Saving faith would now include Christian truth, but not the divine authority of the Church. Since, therefore,

from the standpoint of the Romish Church, this road is impassable, the only remaining course is to say: Catholic Theology may indeed operate offensively and defensively against the opponents of Christianity, and may, in the first respect, especially do some execution against individual opponents. But, for a certainty upon ecclesiastical truth *as truth*, for the internal credentials of truth, and for a scientific apprehension of the verification of truth, it cannot possibly have any heart; because a successful verification of Christianity, by virtue of its internal truth, besides being a proof of the superfluosness of the infallibility of the Church, would also be a dissolution of what it believes itself compelled to regard as the foundation of Christianity. Finally, it is very evident that what we recognised as the central-point of Christianity has merely a casual and formal connection with this ultimate dogma of the infallibility of the Church, because it would be possible for this infallibility to have another foundation than the God-man. Religious communities might conceivably be divinely established and endowed with authority by virtue of human agency.

## SECOND ARTICLE.

### § 7.—*The Certainty of Historic Faith as Faith in the Scriptures.*

Faith in the Bible occupies a higher stage than faith in ecclesiastical authority, as concerns the Christianity of the contents and their desert of confidence. That faith may assume very different forms, according as it aims at the internal certainty of the truth of the contents of Scripture, as in the case of the founders of the Reformation, or according as it remains, as frequently happened later, merely a new form of historic faith, namely, that which aims at the historic certainty only of what Christianity was in its origin and purity. But a mere historic certainty answers neither to what Christianity professes to be and to impart, nor to the idea of perfect certainty. This lack the scientific proofs for the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, possible at

this standpoint, are so little able to supply, that they have rather served to awaken *doubt*.

1. The conscious spirit, which is in search of truth, must become estranged from faith in ecclesiastical authority, inasmuch as the testimony of the Church in its own behalf, and in behalf of what it designates Christian, has become perplexed, contradictory, and enervated in very many ways. The highest concern of the Reformers was the salvation of their souls, for which nobody else could answer, not even the Church, but God alone. They were animated by a desire after truth which directed its attention to what was original and pure, and, by the force of an internal connection with that desire, the religious impulse and the longing after conscious and vital union with God also animated them. In the deep sense of personal responsibility and need of salvation, and with all love to the Church, they had a conscientious dread of regarding the human as divine, or of withholding due honour from the divine. In the great need of the distressed conscience, which felt itself in difficulty between a love which desired the authority of a discordant and impure ecclesiastical tradition, and a longing after Christian truth which is pure and harmonious and saving, the conscientious seeker after God sought and found a solution and an escape in the personal testimony of God, or in the Word of God, in the simple *κήρυγμα*, in the proclamation of the Christian salvation in Holy Writ, which undoubtedly became to the Reformers and to the Christendom of that time the divinely-given, original, and apostolic Word of Christ. If the Church had only kept that word more open and current, it would also have recognised its obligation to remain in accord therewith. Thus, by means of the Holy Scriptures, it was possible for the Christian spirit to satisfy the newly-awakened need, to attain to the possession of true, pure, original, and historically accordant Christianity, and to reopen the well of life, which was almost choked, by means of an exposition proceeding according to correct and non-arbitrary principles; at the same time, it was possible to bring to bear upon the perversities of the pre-Reformation Church a criticism based upon primary Christianity. Freed from the much-misleading authority of the Church by an authority which was

higher and more original, the spirit now possessed a satisfying certainty, and that not only as to what it should regard as historic and pure Christianity; with a historic faith which was purified and buttressed, there was also united, and that the more pure and living the religious need, the liberation from an uncertainty far more serious, namely, concerning personal salvation and eternal divine truth. For the newly-disclosed Word of God in Holy Writ sent forth its rays of original power and beauty into the needy and receptive heart, and gave the believer the certainty that the treasures of the gospel, mercy and truth, were for him and availed for him; that the gospel invites him, yea, desires him to regard himself as atoned for, and as participating in the divine adoption. Like the Reformers, all Evangelical Confessions therefore attribute the salvation and comfort of the soul neither to human power nor to human testimony, but to the powerful and effective testimony of God, as He has given it in His revelation, and as He continually gives it by His Holy Spirit accompanying the Word. It is not the testimony of the Church in favour of the contents and power of the Word, to which the assurance is attributed that we have in the gospel to do with the genuine revelation of God, and that the Spirit, which speaks by prophets and apostles, is truth. For the testimony of the Church in favour of the Scriptures would only be an external and impotent testimony for imparting internal certainty, and that proportionally to the reception of its fallibility. And the Reformers, and their Confessions generally, have decidedly advanced beyond the stage of mere historic faith, as well as beyond that of mere faith in ecclesiastical authority. In regard to the attestation of Christian truth, they have therefore not remained in the position that something is recorded in the historical archives of Christianity, and therefore it is true. In a great number of passages the insufficiency of mere *fides historica* is stated.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. A. XX. 28, p. 17; *Cat. mj.* 381; *Apol.* 69, 125; *F. C.* 585, 684; *Cat. Pal.* ed. Aug. 396 [i.e. the *Augsburg Confession*, drawn up by Melancthon, 20th article, see the *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. XXVI.; the *Catechismus Major*, issued by Luther in 1529; the *Apologia* of Melancthon for the Augsburg Confession, see vol. xxvii. of the *Corpus Reform.*; the *Formula Concordiæ* of the six Magdeburg theologians, 1577; and the *Heidelberg Catechism*, composed at the command of Elector Frederick III. in 1562.—Tr.]

They rather desired to accept and to experience the inner truth of the gospel, of the Christian contents, and gladly invited others to do the same. But although the age of the Reformation advanced as a matter of fact or of practice, by virtue of religious energy and sound tact, from mere historic faith in Scripture to experience of the internal truth and power of the gospel, from *fides generalis* to *specialis*, from *fides historica* to *divina*, deep as were the glances which Luther had taken into this advance, the Evangelical Churches and Theology certainly did not arrive at scientific clearness and evidence respecting this progress from mere historic faith as faith in the Scriptures to certainty of the divine truth of the gospel, of the Redeemer, and redemption. But let the intensity of personal piety and of the endeavour after the more express certainty of the truth and power of the gospel relax somewhat, and there will no longer be the possibility of clearly and purely distinguishing between mere *fides historica*, as faith in Scripture, and *fides divina*; on the other hand, the former may be taken for the latter. For the higher apparently in esteem the Holy Scriptures were subsequently placed, their human and historic side being increasingly forgotten, and the more their external possession was supposed to confer the living Word of God, yea, God, the revealer Himself, the closer lay the temptation to imagine that, without anything additional, hearing of the word of Holy Writ brought contact and fellowship with the living God, and to imagine that, by acceptance of that Word, the saving effects which attached to *fides divina* were received; thus the precise difference between *fides historica* in reference to Holy Scripture and *fides divina* more and more disappeared. This latter standpoint, the relation to Christianity of historic faith as faith in Scripture, must now be more minutely treated.

2. The doctrinal contents of the old Evangelical Church naturally became in their turn a heritage which passed from generation to generation; only thus could they become a secure historical power for Evangelical Christendom in the change of generations (§ 6, 1). But the life of faith by no means remained so vital in the Evangelical Church that this traditional acceptance was merely regarded as an initiatory stage, to which that of personal appropriation and certainty must succeed. To the question, "Why believest thou?" the Evan-

gelical Church always had the answer, it is true, at hand, "Because the Holy Scripture, and not the Church merely, so teaches." But why the Scriptures are to be believed was not stated. That Christianity was contained in the Holy Scriptures, and why; that what the Scriptures contained was undoubtedly both Christian and divine truth,—these things were inviolable,—presuppositions not open to question; and upon them scientific verification was certainly not admitted in the better days of the Evangelical Church, in the sixteenth and part of the seventeenth centuries. It used to be said that the Holy Scripture had the power, like light, of being self-luminous, not merely because it interpreted itself, but also because it accredited itself to the spirit as a divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> It was not the intention, especially at the commencement, and with the best theologians, to exclude the contents of Holy Writ from the power of self-evidence, and to apply this to their inspired form simply; power was rather attributed to Scripture, as an undivorced unity of divine form and divine contents, to certify and prove to the feelings its divine origin. But the main importance was soon attached by theologians to the divine origin and the divine form of Holy Scripture, by virtue of which it attained infallible divine authority; it is itself the objective witness of the Holy Ghost, and all its contents have their own demonstrable divine authenticity, and that previously to religious experience of the internal truth of the contents. Faith in this Biblical form was regarded as a necessary *Præsuppositum* of this experience. To that view not merely the relaxed intensity of personal piety contributed, and the apparent convenience and facility of this method of proof for the Christianity and the truth of the doctrines taught, but the one-sided accentuation of the objective form of the Word of God as Holy Scripture, to the prejudice of subjective experience of the contents, was especially fostered by the position of hostile sects, who simply appealed to their so-called "inward light," and thus to an internal Word of God, an internal experience affirmed by them to be the ultimate authority, but who thus placed their Christianity beyond all control by historical Christianity (as, *e.g.*, the Quakers and the fanatical sects of Germany), and who, nevertheless, whilst they wanted

<sup>1</sup> According to J. Gerhard, Scripture is *autopistos*.

to accentuate simply the ideal side of Christianity, thought to assure themselves a higher and a purer Christian character. The accentuation of the divine origin of the form of Holy Scripture, or of its inspiration, not merely ought to secure, as has been stated, according to the view of these theologians, pure and historical Christianity, but ought also to be the appropriate authentication of the truth of the contents of Scripture more or less independently of subjective religious experience. But if the inspiration of the Scriptures had to answer such great ends, it was only natural that the theory of inspiration should be unnaturally developed in the well-known manner, not to be more minutely touched upon here, and that in this development the foundation should be found for all Dogmatics,—indeed, the verification of the divine truth of Christianity.

3. But even if it could be granted that the inspiration of a writing is a sufficient, adequate, and satisfactory verification of the divine truth of its contents, the question would yet remain to be answered: Whence do we obtain the certainty that the canon is inspired, which the Church has transmitted to us? Recourse could not be had to the authority of the Church, although rightly enough historical tradition was only sifted, and not rejected. The Church was acknowledged to be fallible; indeed, the canon itself was submitted to a criticism which excluded the Apocrypha. Rather was the divine testimony (*Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*) always regarded,<sup>1</sup> in the seventeenth, and partly in the sixteenth century, as the final giver of certainty,—certainly in such a way that this testimony was always referred to the divine *form* of Scripture in a more and more one-sided manner. But the depreciation of personal experience of redemption, and consequently of the divine nature of the contents of Scripture, must be momentous. The remaining accentuation of the experience of the divinity or inspiration of the form of Holy Scripture, proved itself more and more untenable. However entitled we may be to speak of the majesty of the diction of Scripture, and however certain it is that no sensible person can avoid the impression that the divine spirit breathes therein, this impression is nevertheless

<sup>1</sup> Klaiber, Die Lehre d. altprotest. Dogmatiker v. d. Test. Sp. S., *Jahrbücher für d. Theologie*, II.

produced not by the mere form, but mainly by the contents. The testimony of the Holy Spirit gives us no immediate information upon the historic origin of a book, upon its source in an inspired author; it gives us no divine certainty as to the manner and method in which certain writings have arisen in history, at least at the commencement of faith and its foundation, so that it will not do to found the certainty of the truth and divinity of Scripture and of Christianity upon the experience of the divinity of the form of Holy Writ or its inspiration. One had better bestow thought upon the converse,—that the divine character of the contents of Scripture which presents itself to experience may even guarantee the divine character of the form, that form being nothing else than the divine contents made evident and tangible. But since, according to the testimony of experience, and according to the old Protestant teaching, the Christian contents may also exist and produce saving results in other forms than that of Scripture, as in preaching, in creed, and in sacred song, without the belief being compulsory in the inspiration of these works of the Spirit, it is clear that experience of the saving power of the Christian contents is not at any rate an immediate experience of the divine origin and inspiration of Holy Scripture as regards matter and form.

The question concerning the certainty of Christianity as divine truth became more and more a question concerning the certainty of the inspiration of Holy Scripture. Theology essayed the impossible task, which reminds one of the standpoint of Catholicism, of constituting faith in an infallible, formal, and external authority the primary and indispensable preliminary and condition of all certainty of the truth of the contents, by virtue of which authority all its contents were to be adjudged at the outset divine, before it was known what those contents were, or what they might declare. Still more close was the unconscious approach to the standpoint of Catholicism, when, feeling that the testimony of the Holy Ghost could not be appealed to upon the historic origin of Scripture, retreat was made, for the sake of verifying the authority of Scripture, to the Church which formed the canon, and when, indeed, full power was ascribed to the Church, by virtue of its authority, to attribute to a book inspiration and



canonicity. From the *contents* of Holy Scripture, and from experimental knowledge of these contents, attention was increasingly withdrawn, in this position of the affairs of the later Orthodoxy, and bestowed upon the formal principle, the authority of Scripture. Although the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti* was still spoken of, the meaning and importance of the phrase was increasingly weakened and altered.

So early as the close of the seventeenth century many allowed the personal side in the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti* to drop (and thus the *internum*, the subjective assurance), and maintained the following position:—The Holy Scriptures, with the sacraments, are in their objectivity a witness of the Holy Ghost to us, which is entitled to demand obedience.<sup>1</sup> Werenfels, the adherent of declining Orthodoxy and the opponent of Pietism, allows the internal moment, the *obsignatio interna*, to shrivel into the following meagre statement,—that the Holy Spirit recalls to our remembrance passages of Scripture which clearly show that the conclusion of our reason must be true—that we are *fili Dei*. Others said: “In the work of amendment the Christian has a work or testimony of the Holy Spirit; but by the use of the Scriptures he knows himself to be advanced in goodness as he is by nothing else, consequently the Holy Scriptures are also a witness of the Holy Spirit and inspired,”—a mere inference from a probable premise; from something imperfect a perfect thing is inferred. But Werenfels leaves the main point out of the question, namely, how we come to a certainty upon his presupposition, namely, that the Bible is a testimony (*testimonium externum*) of the Holy Spirit? It is no wonder that after 1750, in order not to begin with unproved presuppositions, the position was surrendered, that the Holy Scriptures produce immediately and of themselves the impression of their divine origin and inspiration, and that an endeavour was made to demonstrate their inspiration. Confidence in the power of the contents of Scripture to substantiate their own claims and immediate certainty of faith increasingly declined, whereas reflection, which sought ever more widely for verification, ever increased. The prevailing intellectualism of the old Orthodoxy increasingly lost the sense of religious immediateness; it denominated the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Tholuck, *Commentar zu Röm.* viii. 16.

inferential certain. The very name of the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti* was gradually abandoned in Dogmatics, as the fact had been at an earlier date. But since Evangelical Theology can never recur to the standpoint of a faith in mere authority without retracting the Reformation itself, Dogmatics recognised its duty of giving an account, and the reasons, why it regarded the Holy Scriptures as the sole basis of faith, and as the verification of Christian truth.

### § 7b. Continuation.

#### *The Scientific Attempt to verify Christianity at the Stage of Historic Faith as Faith in the Bible.*

4. It was thought to be possible to give an objective verification of the objective truth of Christianity by *scientific proof*, by means of a proof of the divine authority of Holy Scripture. By means of science *faith itself was to be demonstrated*; faith was not to be the basis and starting-point of Christian knowledge, but the result and effect of proof. In order to controvert the Catholic principle of authority on the one hand, and on the other the subjectivism of enthusiastic and rational views, and in order to obtain a sound basis for Dogmatics, it was thought necessary to look away from the internal effects of Word and Spirit, and it was thought preferable to *proceed objectively by a proof applicable to the universal reason of man of the position that Christianity is truth, because authenticated by the demonstrable divine authority or divine origin of its source—the Holy Scriptures*. An endeavour was made so to arrange this proof that it should even compel unbelievers to acknowledge the divine character of Christianity. This standpoint of *Biblical Supranaturalism* might assume two forms, the *rational* and the *historic*.

The *rational proof* first appeared in the eighteenth century, with the Wolffian Theology. In this reference a few words must first be said upon the history of the relation between Christianity and Reason in the older Evangelical theology, especially as to the *articuli puri* and *mixti*. Luther, it is

true, had adorned human reason with the fairest names when acting in its own sphere—of nature; he called her the queen and mistress in all human arts; but in divine things he describes her as absolutely blind, partly because we cannot know aught of God without God, without His revelation, and partly because our knowledge is darkened by sin. He did not by such an opinion deny that a divine enlightenment and wisdom is given by means of revelation, although revelation appears to the natural man folly. Faith is born into the divine world of truth and wisdom, and can grow in the knowledge of that world; in a word, natural reason can attain a new and higher existence, so to speak, and be born again through faith. The Dogmatics of the seventeenth century demanded for its exposition of Christian doctrine the so-called *usus organicus, instrumentalis*, that is, the formal use of universal human reason; a certain obscure apprehension of God which was natural was also granted, but they did not arrive at so early a date at constructing Dogmatics out of faith which has appropriated or assimilated the contents of Scripture; rather, as has been shown, they constructed their system out of Holy Scripture, which answered by its inspiration for the truth, and not merely for the Christian character of the dogmatic positions, and which was indeed not only a guarantee and divine witness for revelation, but was itself a revelation. A further importance, not limited to that which was merely formal, was attached to human reason from 1650 right on to the eighteenth century, by virtue of the so-called *articuli mixti* to which a place belonged alongside the *puri*. The *articuli puri* are such as are derived from revelation alone, that is, from Holy Scripture, and are mysteries to the natural reason. But the natural reason, as *ratio recta*, it is said, not only possesses within itself the forms of thought (Logic), but also certain ideas of a significant nature, especially a natural apprehension of God, although weakened and disfigured by sin; so that, by virtue of a *notitia insita* (ἐμφυτος), a *theologia rationalis* may be built up. The natural reason may actually have a true apprehension of the divine existence and of certain divine attributes, so that it may be called a second and independent source of theological knowledge, were not so much that is false blended with its truth. These same truths, which the *ratio recta* can apprehend, but

so frequently falsifies, are also contained in the inspired Scriptures, and those dictates of reason first receive through the Scriptures their highest and divine authentication and sanction. Nevertheless, these truths are verified in a secondary manner by the natural reason; therefore they are called *articuli mixti*, not being merely transcendent or mysterious, like the *articuli puri*, but to a certain degree accessible.

To this theory of *articuli mixti* further additions took place, partly in the form of attempts at a *theologia naturalis*, and partly in the form of *rational* attempts at the verification of revelation, that is, of the divine authority of Holy Scripture (Canz, *Compendium theol. purioris*, 1752, deserves special mention), by means of which the rights of the natural reason received an important extension. These attempts were accelerated by the circumstance that there was still something inadequate, as far as certainty was concerned, in placing the *articuli puri*, which were based upon a faith in Scripture, above the natural reason, whilst the best product of the sphere of science, namely knowledge, seemed to be reserved to philosophy, to *theologia naturalis*; whereas, according to the growing conception, its due share in knowledge was denied to faith. The way, then, in which the Wolffian Theology sought for a rational proof of Christianity was as follows:—Inquiries were opened into the possibility, necessity, and reality of revelation. The *logical* possibility was first shown, that is, according to the Wolffian method, that the characteristics of the idea of revelation are not contradictory. Then the *real* possibility was shown, that is, it was shown that revelation is not contradictory to the divine essence as known to reason, nor to the essence of man, whether physically regarded or morally and intellectually, but rather that revelation harmonizes with both. But as a preliminary to both possibilities, the question arose, What are the characteristics of the idea of revelation? These were declared to be the criteria. Revelation must contain such doctrines, or consist of such doctrines (for Christianity was already restricted to doctrine), as could not be discovered by reason; for otherwise revelation would be dispensable, and God does nothing superfluous. Such doctrines of revelation are mysteries, supra-rational, without on that account contradicting natural reason

or natural theology. These mysteries constituting the contents of revelation, its form must have miracles and fulfilled prophecies for the criteria in its authentication. After the rational method had verified the logical and moral possibility of revelation by adducing its non-contradictory criteria, the rational method next advanced to the proof of *necessity and reality*. The necessity is demonstrated, on the one hand, by means of the present ruined state of man ; he must be freed from error, sin, and unhappiness, because he cannot free himself therefrom ; it is demonstrated, on the other hand, by the wisdom, goodness, and majesty of God, which, according to this view, are already established by the *lumen naturæ*. The proof of the *reality* of revelation takes the form that the revelation in the Scriptures shows itself to really answer to those criteria of revelation which regard both contents and form ; it contains mysteries, it narrates miracles and fulfilled prophecies. The two latter points also required the additional proof of the credibility of Scripture, and on this point the rational proof emerges into the historical proof of the *fides humana* of Scripture, although this proof also ran a course independently of the rational.

Put the stringency of the rational proof to the test, and the proof of the necessity of revelation rests upon reasoning in a circle. For, on the one hand, a knowledge of the divine wisdom, goodness, counsel, and purpose, adequate to the verification of Dogmatics as a knowledge pertaining to the universal reason, is already presupposed as a truth which is clear and certain to every man without more ado ; on the other hand, Dogmatics notwithstanding teaches, and rightly, that this true apprehension of God can only be mediated and remain secure by the agency of God and His revelation. For the verification of revelation, that knowledge is thus presupposed which is only given and established by revelation, and that is reasoning in a circle. It was to utter the contradiction in one breath, so to speak, that reason is at once the pupil and the judge of revelation. For the natural reason is supposed to be able to lay down criteria,—not merely negative criteria, which revelation may not contradict, but also positive, to which it must conform. But if the empirical reason, as is simultaneously granted, is tinged with error, revelation may, indeed

must, perfectly well contradict it. But if it were free from error,—if it already possessed upon those important points a pure apprehension of God, it would not need for its rectification the “doctrines” of revelation. Then, moreover, the peculiar doctrines of revelation are supposed to be mere mysteries to bring humility into exercise; and in that case peradventure the opinion held is not that of the Apostle Paul, that mysteries are for non-Christians, and revelation and disclosures for Christians (1 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 10; Eph. i. 9, iii. 4, 9; Col. i. 10); but mysteries, as the Dogmatics of the previous century shows, so far as a claim was made to orthodoxy, are also for believers. They are therefore supposed to remain mysteries; and by that term is to be understood not merely the inexhaustible depths of Christianity, but also their inaccessibility to the thinking mind; and in that case it is certainly far from clear how the special contents of those mysteries which are to produce healthy results can lay hold upon the conscious life of man. The Christian revelation would cease to be a revelation, for a revelation is not given to conceal, but to reveal. Further, a revelation is not given for formal exercise in humility; it has to bring light and life. We must therefore say, that at the same time too much and too little was conceded to reason. Too much, because it was supposed, of itself and without any act of a revealing and living God upon and in the spirit, to have the power of apprehending God; too little, because, in overlooking the plasticity of reason, the assertion is made that only incognizable mysteries form the contents of revelation. By the latter opinion also revelation and its design are abridged. Revelation addresses itself to the reasonable nature of man; it aims at transforming him from one who is blind, or who sees but dimly and insecurely, into one who sees and rejoices in the certainty of truth.

The *historic proof* seeks, in the first place, to verify in historic fashion the credibility (*fides humana*) of the New Testament writers, to constitute the *fides humana* the fulcrum, in order thence to rise to the *fides divina*, to the divine credibility of Scripture, to its divine origin and aspect, to prove the *fides divina* by the *fides humana*. To substantiate the first point, it was necessary to go back to the personality of the holy writers. A preliminary inquiry therefore was, Who wrote these books?

and that is the question of authenticity or genuineness. If this inquiry had only gained the assurance that at least all the principal writings of the New Testament, the so-called Homologoumena, originated in apostles or in disciples of apostles, the further inference might be hazarded, that these men are demonstrably credible—they could, would, and must speak the truth. Therefore what they say is credible. But even if the *fides humana* could have been inexpugnably secured in this manner, still no immediate conclusion could have been drawn as to their *fides divina*. For even if the opinion holds that they give a true report of everything, and especially of the fact that Jesus promised them the gift of inspiration, it would only follow that they actually enjoyed this inspiration when it is proved that the words of Jesus are truth. From an inward experience and apprehension that the teaching of Jesus is of God (John vii. 17), attention was diverted, as has been said; the school of Storr, which has become the classical example of this method, scarcely pays the customary regard to the self-evidencing power of truth by virtue of the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti*, and crushes out this inward aspect of the matter, by means of its mere historical method of proof. There must therefore be interpolated a historical inquiry into the credibility of Jesus as the point of union between the *fides humana* and *divina* of the sacred writers. Thus the whole hung, as was essentially well, upon the authority of Christ. But this proof was again a historical one, and was so conducted that the previously demonstrated *fides humana* was taken as the basis of argument. The syllogism, by which the proof of the *fides humana* of Scripture gave reasonable ground for its *fides divina*, was as follows:—What the sacred writers narrate historically in their authentic works must be regarded as credible; now they narrate the holy manner of thought and act displayed by Jesus; they narrate miracles, and the fulfilment of prophecy; therefore these things are credible. What one who is accredited by such a life, and by miracles and prophecies, says is true, must be accepted as truth. Now Jesus asserts the divine character of His teaching, and promises the apostles inspiration for the purposes of faithful transmission. Thus the New Testament writers attain *fides divina* as well as *humana*. And whatever be the contents of their writings, they are proved in this

way to be true at the outset, and are to be accepted as such. Granted now that this proof for the divine origin of Holy Scripture were cogent in all its parts, we cannot conceal from ourselves that the contents of Holy Scripture—Christianity—are nevertheless withdrawn from view. But it is scientifically inappropriate to think of demonstrating the truth of anything, as, in this case, of Christianity, without already knowing or declaring *what* is to be proved; a proof for the form is no proof for the contents, unless the form is the contents. And we go further. This historical proof aims at verifying the divine credibility or inspiration of Holy Scripture by means of its human credibility. The interpolation of the authority of Christ as the point of union between the starting-point—the *fides humana*—and the goal—the *fides divina*—betrays a consciousness of the fact that Christ alone can properly accredit the divine character of Christianity in the ultimate resort. But, since the very authority of Christ is verified in a purely historic manner by human testimony, it follows that the *fides divina*, which is to be ascribed to the sacred writers, and for their sakes to Christianity, is itself built upon human testimony, the eternal, the divine, upon *fides humana*, in contradiction to John v. 34, iv. 42. But it is further the characteristic of all historical proofs, that they impart the greatest probability in the most favourable case, but no more. The sinlessness of Jesus, for example, is in the above course of demonstration an indispensable presupposition. Nevertheless, an absolutely cogent proof of this by simply historical means, the truth of which every reasonable being would be compelled to recognise as if it were a mathematical proposition, is impossible by reason of the varying spiritual receptivity of men. A cautious historical process may be able to inform us that, historically regarded, everything favours the sinlessness of Jesus, but cannot possibly claim that it has proved the same in cogent fashion. If, then, historical proofs by their very nature can only bring a thing to a high probability, a faith which relied upon such proofs alone would simply be an acceptance on probability, essentially indistinguishable from religious opinion (δόξα). But by mere probable opinions, the conception of which is that they can never absolutely exclude new and possible excep-



tions, religion cannot be advantaged, at least the Christian religion cannot, which promises a stedfast heart (Heb. xiii. 9). Upon probabilities the conscience cannot afford happiness to the soul with any security; the historical proof always leaves an unvanquished residue of antagonistic probability, a *formidinem oppositi*, the contrary state to the complete certainty of faith present to the mind. It is certainly of importance for the origin of faith that it should not be restrained by a notion of the incredibility of the historical contents of Scripture. In order to originate in a moral way, faith must commend itself on the historical side. That is especially true of the credibility of the image of Christ, in order that trust in Him may be formed. But the opinion that the faith which can be verified by purely historical proofs is the true and secure faith, is a mistake. That would be to be content with mere probability, be it as great as it may. That would be to unconsciously alter the material of faith. That would be to treat the material as purely historical, past, and dead, without any internal relation to the present. At the best, all that would be supposed to be left would be the teaching of Jesus upon eternal truths of a dogmatic or ethical kind, which had no historical connection, and was therefore devoid of life; to which we must submit, because He, who has been attested as the Sent of God, has uttered them. But Christianity rather aims at the union of the historic and the ideal (§ 3); and in this way, that this historical form does not simply *speak* of the eternal, the divine, and leave it outside itself, but that it must be grasped as the realization of the ideal, if it is to be correctly conceived. This truth vanished wholly from sight in this apologetical system. On the contrary, Christ simply becomes, according to this method, a means in verifying the inspiration of Holy Scripture, as if that gave to Christianity its *rationale* and verification. The alteration in the Christian object is still more clearly seen, if possible, from the following considerations. Christianity attaches itself above all to the moral and religious side of man, and desires to be appropriated on that side. It would therefore first arouse the corresponding self-knowledge, the sense of need of atonement and sanctification; but it does not at all concede to the morally and religiously obtuse that they can purely and

correctly apprehend Christ as He appeared in history, or believe in Him with perfect surety. This method of proof, however, quite fails to see this. It simply addresses itself to the understanding, as if this had sway over the whole man, or as if agreement with it were itself Christian piety. It addresses itself equally to all men,—to the thought of the universal and healthy human understanding, and allows this to judge according to its customary laws; it thinks it has profited Christianity if this sum in arithmetic is finished, if this course of instruction, this trial of witnesses, has resulted in the apprehension by the head or the understanding of the truth—that Christ is to be regarded as “the divine messenger.” But this style of thought can in fact only satisfy Christian faith if the material of faith is previously made homogeneous with this style of thought, and it is degraded to a mere matter of history, or fact of the understanding, to be treated in forensic fashion, so to speak. But that is no longer Christianity, which professes to be a thing essentially novel, a unity of the historical and the ideal. Christianity has no timidity, but expects that it will be opposed by the understanding which merely reasons, which is blind as to the highest purposes and aims of man who was created in the divine image, which neither knows nor wants to know anything of the need of salvation, and which in its self-satisfaction disdains to allow itself to be transformed and enriched by that Christianity which has approved itself sufficiently powerful and fruitful in the development of the reason of man, that it may expect a surrender on the part of the extra-Christian reason,—that it may demand of that extra-Christian reason the position of the hearer and the learner before that of the judge and assessor. No art, mean it ever so well, as Christianity itself announces, and as follows from its new essence,<sup>1</sup> can make that which is essentially novel and characteristic in Christianity accessible to him who has not some relation thereto of a moral and religious kind. He who holds himself in opposition to this side of Christianity, that is to say, to its *essence*, possesses only the husk.

Since, then, Biblical Supernaturalism had confused ideas about the sphere of Christianity and about the domain of the common understanding of man, and regarded that understand-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 13-15.

ing as able of itself to understand and judge of Christian truth, it renounced at the same time the specific character of Christianity, and the worst fate befell it; by its verification it undermined the material of faith, by its proof it diverted from the true essence of the question, and at the same time, under the pretence of making the best of the matter, it brought doubt upon Christianity, the proofs for which were so lacking in stringency. Distinct as are Supernaturalism and Rationalism, the argument just concluded proves their near relationship.

5. These proofs had the further effect, that the rational self-consciousness, which was looked upon as the ally of Theology, grew increasingly stronger, and arrogated to itself the right of judging upon revelation, its necessity, and its value. Nor did it long remain satisfied with demonstrating of itself that which was above reason, and which should remain as mystery. It found defects and gaps in these proofs, both rational and historic. It doubted the criteria and the necessity of divine revelation. The rational self-consciousness would know nothing of the need of revelation. The reason thought itself capable of being self-reliant, and Christianity was felt to be a burden of tradition, instead of an aid. To the self-confidence of thought, the parallel volitional self-consciousness was necessarily added; intellectual Pelagianism was succeeded by practical. Then the inclination died out to base the necessity of revelation upon the ruined state of man. Therefore, after the Kantian philosophy, the proof for the necessity of revelation was largely surrendered. The advocates of revelation more and more fell into the background, since they no longer ventured to assert with full assurance that there was a need for revelation. Supernaturalism increasingly introduced into the doctrines of Sin and Guilt, of Free-will and of Justification, as well as of the New-Birth, rationalistic elements. Subjective thinking was erected into the sole source of doctrinal truth, the sole judge of revelation, although some would still grant that revelation, or faith in revelation, useful from the presentation of a basis of authority, might, in some circumstances, be necessary as a means for the promotion of the morality of individuals;<sup>1</sup> whilst others, such as Kant, and afterwards C. Ludw. Nitzsch, emphasized the necessity of

<sup>1</sup> Thus Fichte, *Kritik aller Offenbarung*, 1791.

faith in revelation in order to the authentication of the moral community or the Church (no matter, in Kant's esteem, whether faith rested upon truth or mere mental representation<sup>1</sup>); others might possibly concede that revelation shortened the journey of rational development, inasmuch as the results, to which reason would have come of itself at a later date, were imparted to begin with, somewhat as a teacher of arithmetic will sometimes tell the scholar the result, in order that he may more easily recognise and avoid mistakes.<sup>2</sup> Rationalism, in its "self-deluding" form, passed with Dr. Paulus to the essay at proof, that the Holy Scriptures themselves, rightly interpreted, corroborate rationalistic views,—that is to say, that the revelation of the Scriptures itself teaches the superfluousness of revelation. Thus the attempts at making Holy Writ (the formal principle alone) the scientific verification of Christianity, the foundation of Christian Doctrine, ended in the idea that the truth of Christianity ought to be *proved* by Biblicity, i.e. by the inspiration of Scripture, and not merely that Christianity in its original purity should be so measured. It became evident that the opinion must be renounced that the *truth* of Christianity is already verified by its authority, indeed, that its truth cannot be completely secured by the historical method, but may be altered in its contents; and that *consequently Holy Scripture cannot be the first thing*, the divine origin of which is to be proved, in order for faith to begin. Paul, in his mission to the heathen, did not commence by demanding, as the first article of faith, faith in his own divine authority or in the inspiration of the Old Testament; he preached repentance, and to the penitent proclaimed the atonement in Christ.

### § 8.—*Doubt in the Standpoint of Historic Faith.*

Faith in ecclesiastical authority (§ 6), and mere faith in the Scriptures, at one in the fact that they are both simply *historic faith*, neither of them corresponds with the

<sup>1</sup> Thus Kant, in his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*; and Nitzsch, *De revelatione religionis externa eaque publica*, 1808.

<sup>2</sup> Lessing, *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*.

Christian object (§ 3), and they lack true union with that object. This becomes evident by the *doubt* in historic faith, which generally awakens an unrest, an agitation, not morally obviated by a mere recurrence to any one form of that faith which is simply historic, but imparting a forward movement.

1. Merely historic faith, that is, faith which rests upon the testimony and credibility of men (*fides humana*, §§ 7, 7b), if it neglects to strive after religious certainty, cannot remain what it was, since the spiritual life and thought remain agitated. For it is opposed to its material, and the material is opposed to it, and this will be the more evident as time flows on. At any rate, the chasm between the two is internally manifest, and reveals itself by *doubt*. That immediate contact with the Christian contents, and their intus-susception as certain truth which those contents demand, does not take place in every variety of faith in external authority; so little is that the case, that authority which is merely external, if it remains satisfied with that condition, in addition to its essential weakness, is, at the same time, severed from the contents by their self-evidencing force. Christianity desires to be, although historic, no mere phenomenon externally historical and past, but a living, spiritual power, with the ability and will to make itself known to the spirit as an ideal and divine magnitude, as a present, divine might and wisdom. But this native essence of Christianity has not as yet asserted itself at the stage of merely historic faith. And since it has not yet disclosed itself to the spirit under this aspect, it is still opposed to the subject as something foreign. Upon this contradiction between Christianity and the subject a corresponding difficulty follows on the subjective side. The subject first lacks *religious* certainty. For the religious impulse longs for contact with God, and not simply with doctrines or past history. *Scientific* certainty is also wanting. For probability is not knowledge, but mere opinion. The stage of mere historic faith depends upon other men, upon authorities, the value and estimation of which may change. Immediately the spirit, which sought certainty by the historical method, appends the finishing stroke to its calculation.

it must become conscious that the unity which belongs to certainty does not exist between itself and the subject-matter. It is conscious of estrangement between them. When consciousness realizes this variance, historic faith, which in piety or trust ingenuously accepted what it believed, is destroyed and passes into *doubt*.

2. Not every kind of doubt is essentially bad ; especially is that doubt not detrimental, which is opposed to the standpoint of mere historic faith, because that standpoint is an insufficient satisfaction. There is an objectionable doubt, namely, where the attempt is made to get rid of the higher truths and purposes of life, as if they were devoid of force, in order to remain with the less molestation spiritually torpid and perverse. With such immoral doubt science has nothing to do beyond reminding of its objectionable character, and of the common sentiment which generates it. But the doubt of which we are to speak immediately need not be of such a nature. That doubt is, it is true, an imperfect standpoint, an untenable pause. For the subject is, on the one hand, still united to the material of historic faith by reasons of probability and authority ; and, on the other hand, is inwardly estranged from that material, and wrested from repose therein. Thus he wavers and knows not what next to do ; he doubts as much the rectitude of relinquishing the object as the duty of submission to it. This doubt is not the *cause* of the estrangement between the subject and Christianity, but it is originally the consciousness and the expression of the estrangement actually existent within, of the unsatisfactory attitude of the subject and object to each other. So far, it is a step in advance in self-knowledge, but is solely *necessary* as a transitional stage. For since doubt reveals and exposes, as has been said, an insecurity, a suspense, because of a variance existing in the subject himself, the spirit must endeavour to re-establish internal unity somehow or other.

3. This restoration of unity, this reconquest of repose, might in the first place be sought in this way, by laying the ban of *silence* upon the doubt which expresses the disunion ; and this method would be quite legitimate as regards frivolous doubt. But with such doubt we have nothing to do. By

such a course the position of affairs would remain unchanged as far as our doubt is concerned ; the inward disunion would remain after as before, even if the consciousness of the disunion were suppressed. Further, were it desired to re-establish historic or authoritative faith simply by suppressing all thoughts which arose, after it had actually been recognised that such faith could give no security, the process must be followed up by killing all questioning and inquiry after solid foothold and actual knowledge, and all endeavour after internal certainty. It is true the attempt may be made to nonsuit the subjective factor in the disturbance, and to vanquish the position of doubt, so productive of discomfort, simply by a renewed submission to an external authority. But without new and substantial motives for so doing, that would be a flight from doubt, and no conquest. This may be necessary in the Catholic Church, so far as it is unwilling to abandon its standpoint (§ 6). But although, amidst the disasters which recent times have inflicted on inherited faith, many take and recommend this path, namely, to form a simple resolution to submit to what the Church says, either directly, or indirectly by means of the Holy Scriptures which the Church recommends ; and although it may appear convenient to allow the Church to answer for the knowledge of truth or of the Holy Scripture, and to leave to it all vindications of its claims,—nevertheless by such a course an evangelical Christian straightway brings himself into conflict with his Church and the judgments it pronounces upon mere *fides historica* (§ 7, 1). Such a conflict may array itself in the garment of humility, and say that it is meet for individuals to subordinate themselves to the majority, and not desire to exalt themselves above their fellows. But such language, if Luther had followed it, would never have brought a Reformation. He had no desire to exalt himself above the Church, but he also had no desire to subordinate truth to the Church and obey man rather than God. The standpoint of historic faith, which is entitled to its proper place, *cannot* be restored again just in this way ; that is an internal impossibility. For if it is not the power of acknowledged truth which leads back to the common faith of the Church, the renewed union with the object of ecclesiastical faith is still at all times something

merely external, an act of *subjective discretion*; and it is this act, and not its own power of conviction, which the Church or the Scriptures have to thank for their newly-regained authority over us. And in such discretionary act the rights of truth are dispensed with; for we have no right to stamp what we will as truth. If, therefore, such arbitrary submission to an external authority occurs, if such a selection of *authority* as the queen of truth is made under the name of "objectivity," we should rather fall a prey to a self-deceiving and disguised Subjectivism, and the responsibility for our soul's salvation could not be abrogated. And since the tightening anew of the bonds of external authority could not remove that internal estrangement to the subject-matter of historic faith which is still consciously experienced, that tranquillity which was hoped for from the new subjection has to be purchased by ignoring that estrangement and disowning it. That may be called smothering the peculiar bent towards truth-seeking and inquiry, the unlawful narcotizing of the restlessness which was given as an impulse to advance, a wounding of the sense of truth. It may even be called a despairing of the attainableness and accessibility of truth, which betokens not merely a despair of one's own faculty for the production of truth (for a low estimate of this can never harm, and every hasty decision is proof that there is a failure of correctness on the subjective side), but also of the ability and tendency of truth itself to make itself known to the seeker, and to replenish him with a new sense of life. This would therefore no longer be the guileless and ingenuous historic faith of early days, which the child's heart receives by an education in piety, but an arresting and abnormal retrogression, an artificial, premeditated, and capricious self-relegation to the position of a minor, for whom the material of historic faith has just transmuted itself into a mere law. Child-like surrender to God and His truth is becoming even in the mature; it does not enslave, it makes free, since it promises to bestow knowledge of the truth (John viii. 32). But to desire to remain always in the position of nonage is for this very reason contrary to the gospel itself. It leads to erecting in the place of Christ, who promises to make us free indeed, another deified authority; it leads to wishing



to falsify the gospel, and to vanquish doubt, which tempts to unbelief by superstition, itself again a mere veiled unbelief in the power of truth. Spiritual sloth and disinclination have no wish to advance to evangelical faith; the struggle and labour is too costly; its wish is rather to recede. But what is to be attained by recession is a false peace, which is made at the cost of the personality; stunting is preferred to a healthy growth; a peace which may be disturbed at any moment, because it is not conscious of, nor does it contain, truth as truth, but has always to rely on something external to itself. Secure repose would only come by the death of all search after truth down to its innermost shoot. The difference between him who says "personal certainty upon these things which are at once the holiest and the most necessary is not attainable, therefore it is not a duty to seek those things, and the ruling opinion in one's own circle is to be followed as the most probable," and him who says, in his infidel estrangement, "What is truth?" is not so great as it appears, for even in the former case unbelief exists in the living power and will of truth to make itself apprehensible. So artificially restored a faith in authority has nothing else for its foundation than scepticism, and that a radical scepticism, not merely relating to some single point, but to those things which it is most necessary and valuable to know; in a word, to the things of salvation.<sup>1</sup>

4. Accordingly, we must therefore insist that doubt, which is not content with the standpoint of mere historic faith, is entitled to convict the form of mere historic faith of incompleteness, and is meant to serve that purpose. Doubt is a restlessness in the subject which has its sound internal justification, checks spiritual immobility, and indicates a necessary advance.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Martensen, *Kathol. u. Protest.* 1874. The "security" of Catholicism is not certainty, but rests mainly upon scepticism in the cognoscibility of truth. But faith cannot allow itself to build upon scepticism; see the close of § 2.

## SECOND SUBDIVISION.

THE SECOND RELATION OF THE SUBJECT TO CHRISTIANITY,  
OR THE CONTINUED RECOIL FROM THE HISTORIC.

(COMP. § 5.)

## FIRST ARTICLE.

## § 9.

Since Christianity does not desire a faith which is merely historic, and which rests on historical authority, but lays claim to an essentially ideal and eternal import, the subject, who has become confused upon historical faith, and who yet desires a personal certainty, naturally betakes himself to that aspect of thought which, being spiritual, promises more content to the spirit (§ 3). But the various possible methods of attaining religious certainty and content by surrender to an unhistorical ideal, neither correspond in their tenor to Christianity nor yield true religious certainty.

1. The fact that Christianity desires to be no mere historic or empirical magnitude, but essentially an ideal magnitude of an eternal import, could never have quite withdrawn itself from the consciousness. Even the standpoint of historic faith sees in Christianity a benefit to the immortal soul, if only its verification might be reached by so deficient a method, and not from its internal power. It was, properly speaking, the ideal worth attributed to Christianity, for the sake of which trouble was taken, as has been shown, in establishing the historic. But the more tottering the historic props became to the consciousness of the time, the more strenuous became the endeavour to become conscious of unity with Christianity, and to rejoice in the certainty of its truth on the ideal side, which, appearing to lie nearer to the spirit than the historic, promised to confer the missing certainty. It would be wrong to deny that if the unhistorical ideal was emphasized,

the genuine intention in such a course was to serve Christianity, and, without injury to its essence, to introduce the era of a higher and purer stage of faith by demanding submission to that ideal,—an era which hoped to be able to legitimate itself as a higher era, at any rate according to the evangelical conception, because of its more intensive leaning towards personal certainty of the contents of faith as compared with historic faith.

*Faith* in this ideal may even be demanded; the hope may be no less entertained of having preserved in that perishable ideal the immortal essence of Christianity—indeed, of having brought that essence, in its purity, into strong relief, freed from the disfiguring obscurations and veils of history. But as this essence of Christianity might be differently represented, according to the manifold fulness of that idea, we have to limit ourselves in this place to those conceptions which render such aspects prominent as connect themselves most closely and strikingly with the Ego and its self-certainty.

2. The ideal of Christianity has been and may be found in the sphere of *intelligence*, of *will*, or of *feeling and disposition*. Lessing first formulated the standpoint to be immediately treated, by his contrast between “the eternal truths of the spirit and the contingent truths of history.” By the former he understood eternal truths, partly moral and partly metaphysical. The former Kant insists upon, and the latter the later philosophy, whilst Jacobi finds anew in Christianity the presentiments of the nature athirst for God, for a Being “higher and better than I,” perception of whom faith gives. Kant referred the ideal, in his esteem rooted upon an impregnable basis, to the *will*, and conceived it as the practical moral law, in favour of which he also laid claim to a faith of the practical reason. Hegel, like Schelling, recognises the idea of the divine incarnation as the central point of Christianity; but this incarnation is conceived as an eternal incarnation, so that, as an eternal occurrence and occurring, it nevertheless expresses nothing but the eternal metaphysical relation between God and humanity, which is conceived as a unity of essence, only that there exists a difference in the stages of the consciousness of this ever existing and eternally similar unity of essence in God and man. With the historic side of Chris-

tianity, and with the person of Christ Himself, this whole standpoint so endeavours to square accounts, that it strives to trace lines of connection between the empire of eternal truths and the historic Christ, in order to unite the two somehow in our consciousness or faith. Thus Jesus of Nazareth is the proclaimer of eternal truths, the empowered revealer of those truths, by virtue of His gifts and His endowment—only He in no way belongs to the contents of the eternal truths. Or, to speak more precisely, He is the revealer of the true moral law, of the law of freedom, and the moral and religious exemplar who has disclosed the holy, divine will, so that the name of Redeemer may remain His because of the effect of His doctrine and example upon knowledge and will. Jesus is also regarded as the providentially selected founder of the moral empire or the Church. Or He is the first man in whom the consciousness has arisen of the actually existent unity of essence between God and man, and at the same time the consciousness of divine relationship or sonship, unmistakeably combined with a power which kindles the same consciousness in humanity, and awakens within it the consciousness of its real nature. Or, finally, it is said that in the representations of Christianity respecting the historic manifestation of Christ the objectivated symbol is to be seen of those presentiments which the pious disposition bears in its own nature, whilst, indeed, there is room neither in the world of historic reality nor of intelligent thought for such a manifestation as Christ is according to the faith of the Church. That Christianity may be legitimated as the religion of reconciliation, there is seen in the high and pure appearance of Jesus complete love and wisdom, or, still more precisely, a symbol of the divine love still bestowed upon men notwithstanding their sin; there is seen in His self-renouncing and blessed work for man, especially in the founding of a religious-moral Christian community, a sign of God who is still merciful to us, or of His eternal reconciliation with humanity. Both the older Supernaturalism and the earlier and later Rationalism are concerned in the line of thought thus sketched. And that line of thought certainly has an element of truth which must not be undervalued, as is the case in the Greek Church, which regards Christ as

pre-eminently the Revealer of divine truth, as the Teacher of wisdom ; and in the Romish Church, which especially regards Him as the Initiator of a new order of life, as the Founder of the Church, to the members of which the divine mercy is secured. This reflection should ensure us against the short-sightedness which is forthwith inclined to view as hostile those who especially attach themselves to one of the ideal sides of Christianity. Their position, where it does not lack honest endeavour, may rather be the commencement and preparation for a higher stage of faith than the mere historic.

3. But, of course, it can be no more than that. For the eternal truths of an ethico-religious kind, be they theoretical or practical, are non-historic, and only eternally uniform. They are said to be self-evident to the spirit, which has once conceived them. They are said to be the dowry of universal reason, if not as ready formed and inherent ideas, yet as of such a nature that the reason needs only to reflect upon itself to possess them. But that is to allow at the outset that only a perishable importance attaches to the historic, in fact, that a merely casual importance attaches to the peculiar essence of Christianity. For many theologians, it is true, have willingly conceded that the Founder of our religion has rendered the service of having been the first to conceive certain ideas in history, to accelerate the development of their apprehension, to disseminate them, or to secure to them a strong hold upon humanity by establishing a community for their maintenance. But they must all still agree that the historic is superfluous in their view immediately reason has become influential ; just as when heights have been scaled there is no longer need for the guide by whose aid the ascent was made. If the historic is incapable of forming any part of the empire of the eternal truths, the historic person, who furthered the apprehension of eternal truths, *can* only have a transitory importance for those who are actually in present possession of the truth. Indeed, for the permanent pædagogic importance of the founder of a religion, his person is something adventitious. An attempt might, it is true, be made, with the supernatural rationalists, to secure to the enlightened proclaimer by doctrine and life of eternal truths a significance far above the casual and transient, by regarding

him as a providential mission, as a divine ambassador, perhaps also to be regarded as invested with miraculous powers for the attestation of his teaching. But if the eternal truths which he introduces and secures to human knowledge owe their attestation or ratification merely to his historic person or his personal condition, the result is a recurrence to the stage of historic faith and its doubtful certainty, as already shown. Thus it is inevitable, where the heart of the Christian religion is found in ideal and eternal truths, that the historic should have in that case a merely adventitious and transitory importance,—a view which is most strongly expressed by saying that faith, which cleaves to the historic in Christianity, is to be regarded as a stage to be outgrown by increased knowledge—as a kind of “Hypothesis.” Readily consistent, of course, with this remark is the recognition of the undeniable fact that historic Christianity has essentially contributed to the pure development of reason in man, and even to the apprehension of eternal truths.

4. The ideal of Christianity is, too, an essentially different thing to the ideal of these eternal truths, and in no way identical therewith. The latter are and remain essentially non-historical, whether they express the merely ideal apart from existence, or whether they express what is eternally happening and existent (as the idea of eternal incarnation, which is identical with the unity of essence in man and God). It is not these “eternal ideas” which have a history, but only *the consciousness of them*; and this consciousness is never their work, any more than morality, but the work of the human faculty of reason. On the other hand, the ideal of Christianity is not an abstract and lifeless eternal truth, something like a logical or mathematical proposition, or an eternal law of morals. Rather is it something endowed with life and motion. Historical movement does not first reach the Christian ideal from without, nor is reality a mere supplement; the Christian ideal is already real, and is no mere ideal. The ideal of Christianity lays claim, just as it is in itself a divine and real principle, and has no mere ideal existence, to energy to realize itself in history, to achieve an *existence* also in phenomenal reality which it did not previously have, either of itself or otherwise (§ 3). It claims to have absolute realization in the person of Christ. Consequently

the ideal of Christianity is only thought, when it is thought in this its essential and immanent inclination towards historical realization, and simultaneously as eternally living and as a real potentiality. At the same time, the historical in the Person of Christ is remote from the transitory and adventitious. Hence it follows that faith in the eternal ideas, even if it actually be faith as self-denying trust, and not a mere product of the spirit in lieu of reception, is nevertheless not Christian faith; that union with the spirit which is demanded by Christianity is not by any means found at this stage; and that union which is possible at this stage does not yet embrace Christianity in its completeness. Add to this, that this standpoint does not in any of its forms afford religious certainty and content. This Jacobi emphasizes, when he speaks of two seas, between which he must swim; the one of which continually overwhelms, whilst the other floats him; or when, recognising the inward unvanquished schism, he says, "With the heart I am a Christian, and a heathen with the understanding." Kant despatches our moral endeavour upon a *progressus in infinitum*, where the constant approach to the goal has as reverse side an eternal separation from the goal. Ethical ideas promote in the most favourable circumstances goodness and divine fellowship, but do not vouchsafe these, unless a good life is generated. And generally also the eternal truths cannot of themselves vouchsafe religious content and certainty. To think them, even if the idea of God be amongst the number, neither makes nor is pious. Indeed, were knowledge in its perfection (as absolute knowledge) to abolish the distinction between God and man, and relegate that distinction to the mere forecourt of pure thinking, to "mental representation," "*religious certainty*" would be never subsequently sought after; it, as well as religion, would be a vanquished standpoint. The same thing would happen if on the volitional side perfection were to be found in "absolute freedom," or on the emotional side in the absolute self-sufficiency of subjective excitation.

## SECOND ARTICLE.

## § 9b.

Inasmuch as the philosophic deduction or verification of the idealistic standpoint is not adapted to become a substitute for religion, and especially of Christian certainty and the certainty Christianity promises, philosophy has just as little right to nonsuit the process which has the religious certainty of Christianity for its goal. On the contrary, those tendencies of philosophy which are conceivably the most inimical to Christianity are adapted, as a negative impulse, to reconduct to that process, since the systems erected upon absolute Idealism, Materialism, and Scepticism commend in their turn a search after spiritual union with Christianity.

1. Seeing that Christianity must deny that the contents of the idealistic standpoint really express the kernel of its teaching, or that the certainty claimed by this standpoint is itself Christian certainty (§ 9), the subject, who has attained clear consciousness of himself and of the aims of historic Christianity,—whether that consciousness arise from his own knowledge, or by means of the opposition of the Christian community visible in every century alike,—must come to the conclusion that there is something in that standpoint internally contrary to Christianity. Should there be a determination to let a merely non-historical ideal pass as valid, the breach with historical Christianity is of necessity completed with augmented consciousness. Should criticism, at this time, of the sources of the historical knowledge of Christianity shake confidence in their credibility, the idealistic view withdraws yet more openly from the historic as from something subordinate and indifferent, and commends that standpoint the more which is independent of all history, and from which, the ruling historical representation being relinquished, Christianity may be calmly surveyed, and the idealistic view is strengthened in its endeavour to found the reason, whether it be the religious



or the thinking reason, purely upon itself. The most complete method of connectedly deducing a mode of thought is the systematic, the offspring of the philosophic spirit. And, indeed, the German mind has, in vigorous consciousness of intellect, essayed that progressive movement, which had become the great moral problem because of doubt in the authority of mere historic faith, and so essayed that movement that it hoped by means of a knowledge that was to be self-evolved, and therefore by means of an intellectual process, with or without agreement with Christianity, to gain peace of mind, or an equivalent for faith and its certainty. By exhausting effort, it has created (as already notified in § 9) a series of powerful philosophic systems, which come forward and claim to afford in scientific fashion a more secure truth and a more satisfying certainty than historic Christianity can vouchsafe.

2. It can neither be our intention nor duty to delineate and criticize in this place even the principal systems, especially since Kant. Acquaintance with them and with the course of philosophical development is rather to be presupposed. The course of the more recent philosophy, to confine ourselves to views related to our theme, has been, roughly speaking, as follows: it commenced with *a priori* speculation, first in the form of a subjective, and then of an objective idealism; then, conscious of an omission, it betook itself to experience, but in an empirical and sensualistic form, which brought about a materialistic mode of thought; but this phase, in which it sought to constitute itself scientifically, either passed *subjectively* into mere "Phenomenalism" (in the opinion of which, since we have not things themselves within us, but only sensuous affections, the whole objective world is resolved into a world of subjective "phenomena" or representations), or, where the *objective* world and its plurality was strongly insisted on, it passed into a spiritualism, to which even the material is, properly speaking, spirit, but to which, after the elimination of the idea of God, there remains no place for an absolute unity which holds the plurality of the world together, and there exists instead of a fictitious "Monism" a Pluralism absolutely destitute of idea and aim, in which the world-unity disappears; finally, Schopenhauer and von Hartmann sought to give simultaneous utterance to the hitherto opposite principles of

absolute Idealism and Materialism, of Pantheism and Pan-cosmism (or Atheism), of unity and plurality, without effecting a reconciliation, and thus ended in a screaming contradiction, the opposing terms of which destroyed each other,—in a Nihilism, a sceptical apotheosis of Nothing, in which not religion merely and the moral world were annihilated, but knowledge, volition, and thought. *Formally* regarded, a reference to the theoretical conditions of knowledge, which subjective Idealism (that of Fichte) and Materialism gainsay, though in different ways, would suffice, the former not attaining to an equivalent knowledge of actual existence, and the latter in the form of Phenomenalism not attaining to certainty.<sup>1</sup> And as touching the *contents* of these systems, they only call for treatment, in as far as they give rise to the question, whether they are in a position to supply a substitute for religious certainty, and whether, if that be not the case, they preclude the possibility of faith and its reasonable legitimacy? As far as the *first* query is concerned, it is certainly not right to assert, after what has been previously said (§ 1), that knowledge has nothing to do with faith; on the contrary, we maintain that faith is constituted by certain objective contents, which exist for the intellect. But the scientific process is one thing, the religious another,—Metaphysics and Theology are one thing, Religion is another; so that, granting that the scientific process attained most favourably what truth or certainty it was able, still there would be in that acquisition no equivalent for what the pious man desires and needs. He does not desire commerce with his own thoughts, but real communion with God. Thus the question remains, Whether philosophy or any one of its systems precludes the possibility of faith? Such would be the case if faith could only be arrived at by a violation of the sense of truth, and thus if it were spoiled of those prerequisites, without which it could not originate or endure logical or moral method. Since, now, Christian faith, in order to correspond with its material (§ 3), must embrace the historical and the ideal (the divine), its very foundations would be removed to

<sup>1</sup> Herbart rightly insists that there can be no talk of appearance apart from something which appears; Phenomenalism which rejects spirit has no means of passing from the semblance to the thing which seems.

begin with, and its possibility negated, if philosophy demonstrated that there was an ideal, and a realization of that ideal, to be assumed, but only in the Absolute or God, whilst an actual world distinct from God was non-existent. Christian faith would also become impossible if a philosophic system could show that only the world exists, and that, although there is in or on the world an ideal, at any rate there is nothing really divine, in fact, all reality is wholly confined to the world, and therefore even God cannot reveal Himself in the world. The process of faith, with which religion has to do, has for its fundamental postulate that there is a difference between the world and God, union with whom religion straightway seeks. Faith does not wish to be a mere relation to itself or to its representations and thoughts. That would simply be a monologue; faith desires a dialogue. Therefore it does not consort with a Monism, which only recognises God or the world (with the Ego). The duality (not the dualism, which is opposed to such Monism, but which, as will be shown later, has no desire to oppose the rational demand for unity) being, in fact, a condition of true and vital unity, may be attacked in two ways, according as one or other member of the contrast is exclusively regarded, whether God alone or the world alone. Negatively expressed, there arises in the one case *Acosmism*, and in the other *Atheism*; positively expressed, in the one case *God* is everything (Pantheism, Theopantism), in the other the *world* is everything (Pancosmism). However diverse the inflections of these theories, all such variations are secondary in comparison with their relation to that indispensable fundamental postulate of faith.

3. The proof that a difference is to be maintained and verified between God and the world cannot, nevertheless, be undertaken here; that question belongs more appropriately to the limits of the System itself. Nor is the solution of that question requisite in order to give free course to the growth of Christian faith, and to render its origination possible. But we must briefly delay to show that the possibility is not removed from faith by philosophy of pursuing its own way of pure consciousness; and on purity of consciousness we of course reckon, since faith also stands in need of objective truth, that it may not wish to be perfected at the price of opposition to the laws of thought

and knowledge. It might now appear the simplest course to refer to the contradictions displayed by the philosophic systems, and to the fact that, although they commonly rely upon the universal reason, they do not meet with universal assent, nay, they controvert each other, and do not seemingly weary of mutual refutation; as well as to refer to the fact that every important system begins anew from the very commencement, and that, at least since the decline of the authority of the Aristotelian System, every successive generation accepts very conditionally the inheritance bequeathed by its predecessor; so that there is an actual lack of axiomatic truths, which may be called the common property of the universal human reason. The fact may be bewailed, but it is none the less a fact. Still it would be impossible to release ourselves from our task in that easy fashion. For the position that philosophers are never tired of confuting one another would only afford us a really cogent argument if this reciprocal combat demonstrated the impossibility of philosophy generally ever attaining *any* certainty, and demonstrated that of a progress in the apprehension of truth there can be no talk in the philosophic sphere. But we should in this way justify that last phase of philosophy which is only too influential at the present time—that of universal pessimistic scepticism; and such an opinion would scarcely benefit true religious faith or even theology. In Theology, as well as in other sciences, the battle of diverse opinion goes on; but Theology does not for that reason relinquish the conviction that by means of the conflict some advance is made. The same thing may happen in the philosophic sphere. A profound treatment recognises that, in spite of the apparent chaos, there is a connection in the consecutive philosophic systems, that each successive system aims at correcting its predecessor upon those points which constitute its conspicuous weakness, and demonstrates the impossibility of abiding by that system. This rectifying process is of course commonly effected by the new system overstepping in its turn the bounds of truth, and so falling into the opposite and yet erroneous one-sidedness which calls once more for rectification. Thus systems of *a priori* Idealism are followed by systems of Empirism, which, relying consistently and exclusively upon the empirical principle, pass over into

Materialism and Sensualism, and which, if the labour of search and thought does not stand altogether still, must in their turn experience the overmastering power of Idealism upon the self-assertive human spirit (*e.g.* in Phenomenalism, and in the impossibility of excluding the principle of Teleology). History shows an actual alternation between philosophic dogmatism (whether of an idealist or empirical kind) and criticism, or, to give a concrete example, between the domination of pantheistic and deistic modes of thought, each of which bears the other unconsciously in its womb. If the manner is surveyed in which this alternation, this dissolving view, is effected, a circular movement is certainly evident, which, in its restless *revolution* to the opposite, at last evokes the impression that as far as philosophic thought is concerned everything is fluctuating and nothing stable, and that a step in advance is never taken. But a more profound treatment perceives a law even in this dissolving into opposite principles. In that unrest, which prevents repose in any one-sided principle, but which laboriously extracts from each its opposite, there is seen the superior strength of the whole truth, which will not tolerate the acceptance by thought of a fragment for the whole. In this restless motion, the principles which are united and coherent in the whole truth are seeking one another, whilst in the exclusive and one-sided form in which they first appeared, they do not unite in consciousness, they do not attain to simultaneous presence in the spirit, and therefore they are only able to appear incessantly in succession. Let this be once recognised, and the prospect is already revealed of the possibility of breaking through this circle. Consciously superior to this magic circle, in which error is condemned to remain by a higher law, the thinking spirit must feel itself challenged to give to the principles which display in motion so great and irresistible a power, and which, without actually being able to find each other in their one-sided form and unite, are nevertheless in quest of each other,—to give them that form in which they really can and will coalesce into an unity, excising that exclusiveness which is only too speedily requited and punished by just as one-sided an assertion of the neglected side. This conception of the History of Philosophy in no way countenances the opinion of the vanity of all philo-

sophic toil ; it rather concedes a relative value even to the most one-sided systems, in which there actually is, notwithstanding, a regular consecution of thought ; but it must, it cannot do otherwise than, reserve the reward and the praise of actual and direct advance to the goal for those who, breaking through that magic circle, aim at the unifying of the motive principles, and who thus (to keep our purpose in mind) renounce a false and precipitate Monism, either of an idealistic or materialistic kind, and, by acknowledging a duality of principles, endeavour to acquire a knowledge, an apprehension, of their internal relationship and union. Thence it will assuredly follow that the supreme ideal principle will not be considered as opposed to the material world, but it will be considered in such a way that it will itself be the principle of the existence of an actual world ; and it will follow that the world will not be regarded merely as the contrast to the ideal, the spiritual, and the divine, but as constituting therewith an intimate unity. By this duality, which permits and seeks a union of opposites, a way is again left open for faith to develope.

4. It is, however, quite possible, as recent phenomena show,<sup>1</sup> that the circular movement mentioned may be surveyed and acknowledged, but that (instead of inferring thence the doctrine by which the prospect presents itself of breaking through the limitations, and instead of advancing to the task of divesting both elements, the Absolute and the material world, of their contrasted and exclusive conception, in order that their union may be possible, and one may not be the abolition of the other) it is merely accepted as an unhappy fate that they should be exclusive, and form a direct contradiction which ineffaceably inheres in them, although each of those elements possesses an internal necessity of producing of itself its hostile opposite in an eternal round of repetition. It is possible to surrender oneself to a *dualistic* mode of thought. It is then maintained that the "Original Will," or the "Unknown" (which in this connection means the Absolute, or at any rate assumes its place), is the fundamental essence, the truly substantial. That it may not remain a lifeless and death-like potentiality, "blind will" produces in an aimless, endless stream. In order that it may produce, it

<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer and von Hartmann.

must posit something—it must utter objectivations. But since no substantial existence can belong to these,—for the Original Will, the Unknown, is exclusively the substantial,—these objectivations are merely an accident or semblance.<sup>1</sup> But although this semblance may be retained for a longer or shorter time, the world is in itself a simple contradiction; for to have any real existence, and to be free from limitation, finiteness, and misery, it must be substantial existence (whilst it is only an accident or semblance of will). The consequence is, that it comes to an end even as a phenomenon or semblance. The irrational element in its idea (“this world is worse than no world”) brings about its annihilation. But the necessity is certainly not thus annulled, by which the Absolute is compelled to posit eternally a bad world, inasmuch as it must eternally go to annihilation. We will not linger here upon the fact that the exclusion of the ethical idea from the idea of the Absolute, and from that of the world, is the reason why this theory is only a copy of the course of nature, which as eternally swallows up physical products as it calls those products into at least a perishable existence. But it may well be remembered in this connection that even according to this theory man himself excels nature, and seems to be destined to a better fate, inasmuch as he *has a conscious-*

<sup>1</sup> Nor is a materialist bias wanting. Intelligence and consciousness are not given, according to Schopenhauer, together with the “Will;” rather, the will works blindly, and is merely will to live. The same Will appears in gravity, chemism, crystallization, vegetation, and organization, even to the formation of the nervous system by which consciousness is generated. Consciousness is nothing else “than the focus in which all the faculties of the brain coalesce” (Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga und Paralipomena*, II. 48). The body is a function or phenomenon of volition; the intellect, a function of the body. Consciousness is therefore a phenomenon of a phenomenon. With these views Schopenhauer also unites an Idealism, for which the whole actual world has no essential existence, but which belongs to mere blind volition. Matter itself, out of which consciousness is said to arise, is again a mere phenomenon in his esteem—not a substantial existence. “The subject of cognition is nothing in himself.”—*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 4th edit. 1873, II. 314. Von Hartmann, it is true, ascribes to the “Unknown” both eternal volition and representation; but the “baseness of the world” compels him to say that essentially unreasoning will has worked its own ends apart from intellect; hence originates the irrationality of this world, which, moreover, if there must be a world, is the best possible. *Philos. des Unbewussten*, 5th edit. pp. 673, etc. Comp. Harms, *Die Philos. seit Kant*, pp. 564, etc. Hartmann’s Eschatology is universal, cosmic Nihilism,—not individual Nihilism, as with Schopenhauer.

ness of the contradictions which this sphere cannot resolve of itself. But thence there follows for man, who is consciously implicated in this process of eternal alternation (if there is no escape for him from the limitations, by virtue of a super-physical principle), an inalienable unhappiness, and, as regards the view of the world, a Pessimism, in which all worth comes to grief,—the world, which is merely regarded eudæmonistically, being a living contradiction. Thus this dualism becomes *Nihilism*, and can in truth retain neither the pure idea of the Absolute nor that of the world. It ends in a despair of the highest good but ill-veiled by resignation, in a despair of knowing aught really estimable, instead of allaying thought or the human spirit. The contradiction in which it remains has its origin in a bad, physical, or simply extensive, conception of the infinite, according to which the infinite is mere endless, extended existence, which must be limited by the concrete within or without it, and, indeed, must have its infinitude annulled. But this physical idea of the infinite and of the corresponding idea of the finite is not proved; it is only dogmatically presupposed by the advocates of this Dualism, and thus comprehends no knowledge and no certainty (as is also shown by the loose cohesion of the method). It does not even include a knowledge of the impossibility of attaining a knowledge and a certainty. Therefore this dualistic, pessimistic theory has no right to hinder faith in its endeavours to grasp the infinite and the finite in that harmonious union which Christianity claims and shows to be realized in Christ. On the contrary, it may possibly impart a negative impulse to drive the spirit along other lines, to avoid arriving at such an end and digging its own grave of despair.

5. But if, consequently, the fatuous knowledge of a comfortless dogmatic Dualism may not hinder us, may an equally hopeless Scepticism oppose with any soundness sure and direct advance to religious and scientific certainty? It is of course possible that, after the *a priori* idealist Systems and the empirical Systems of Sensualism and Materialism are run through, each of which promised mental satisfaction without keeping its word, the subject, who is weary of disappointment, and who has surveyed that vertiginous circle of systems, may now resign himself to a Scepticism which despairs of the



accessibility of truth generally. The reply might be made that Scepticism is no hindrance, but rather an advantage, in the advance to faith. For since it does not venture an assertion, it cannot hinder the endeavour to obtain guidance elsewhere than from itself. Many, indeed, regard sceptical modes of thought as so slightly prejudicial to the genesis of faith, that those modes of thought are regarded as the right preparation for faith. But he who despairs of certainty in general, and says, with Faust, "I see that we can nothing know," and in such desperation would leap into faith at a bound, cannot apprehend the act of faith as a duty, and therefore cannot arrive at faith, and thence at certainty, by a moral road. Such faith would be worse than the previously-mentioned faith of an immature and ingenuous piety (§ 6). A faith arrived at absolutely without apprehension of duty and truth, and consequently blind, could not acquit itself of subjective arbitrariness; it would be mere faith in a human and external authority, and its certainty must suffer from this origin in an arbitrary self-selected authority. Conscious that the selected authority owes its validity not to its truth, but to volition, the certainty which thus arises bears in itself the seeds of scepticism. But a sceptical faith is a caricature. If, therefore, a spiritual immobility and cessation of vitality is not to follow,—if progress is to be increasingly secure and direct,—scepticism must itself be confounded and shaken, instead of betaking itself to the support afforded by a mere faith in authority. Confidence in the attainableness of truth must revive. And science may of course contribute something to that end, seeing that we have already recognised (§ 4) the logical impossibility of absolute scepticism. Add to this also the indissoluble connection of morals with the search after knowledge likewise already established, and this reflection must lead further on a right path. It may be correct that this man or that cannot arrive, because of his empirical nature and so long as that lasts, at a satisfactory and significant knowledge and to certainty of the contents. But for that inability the lack of cognoscibility in the object generally must not be blamed. The blame may even lie on the subjective side, namely, in the fact that the homogeneity with the object to which the object can disclose itself has not yet been found. It is thus indicated

how the sceptical subject, whilst examining doubt, puts himself in a position contrary to his own interests, and contrary both to the claims of agreeable self-content and the right of despairing of truth and certainty, both of which may alike render much service to spiritual sloth and ease. The desire to remain in a state of simple scepticism, or in a condition of despair of the attainableness of truth and certainty, is therefore a moral impossibility, because the moral impulse to spiritual self-preservation and to the development of the personality has commenced and must continue. To this self-preservation belongs the desire and endeavour after the advantage of truth, as well as the confidence that candid search will not remain unrewarded. This search is a duty. And since this search could not be maintained by any one without such a confidence, or without a faith in the attainableness of that good, the faith is also a duty that our entire organization and the objective world of truth correspond and possess a homogeneity, and that the true and veracious object, in contact with the appropriate sensibility, is apprehensible by the latter, and can evidence itself as truth, although not without progressive toil. These fundamental principles rejoice in the recognition of a large number of esteemed philosophers of more recent days.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher, *Die philosophische Ethik*, introd.; *Dialektik*, pp. 19, 30, 31, 69. H. Ritter, *Encyclopädie der philos. Wissenschaften*, 2 vols. 1862-1864; *System der Logik und Metaphysik*, 1856. Fr. Harms, *Die Philosophie seit Kant*, 1876. Chalybäus, *Wissenschaftslehre*, 1846; *Philosophie und Christenthum*, 1853. Ulrici, *Gott und die Natur*, 1866, 2d edit.; *Gott und der Mensch*, 1866; *Glauben und Wissen, Speculation und exacte Wissenschaft*, 1858. Fichte (the younger), *Anthropologie*, 1856; *Psychologie*, 1864; *Theist. Weltanschauung*, 1873; Weiss, *Idee der Gottheit*, 1833; *Philosophische Dogmatik*, vol. I. 1855. Karl Philipp Fischer, *Die Idee Gottes*, 1839; *Encyclopädie der philos. Wissenschaften*, vol. I. pp. 141, etc., 1847; Ulr. Wirth, *Philos. Zeitschrift von Ulrici und Wirth*, 1865; *Die speculative Idee Gottes und die damit zusammenhängenden Probleme der Philosophie*, 1845. Trendelenburg, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2 vols., 1862. Franz von Baader, *Fermenta cognitionis*. Franz Hoffmann, *Philos. Schriften*, vol. I.; *Theismus und Pantheismus*. Sengler, *Erkenntnislehre*, 1858.

## THIRD SUBDIVISION.

THE THIRD RELATION TO CHRISTIANITY, OR THE STAGE  
OF RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY.

## FIRST ARTICLE.

§ 10.—*Deliberation upon its own Nature or Doubt growing  
Practical.*

THE religious impulse (*Trieb*) becoming associated with the conscience, instead of succumbing to theoretic doubt in Christianity, cuts a new road to certainty, the road of ethico-religious self-knowledge founded on experience. This self-knowledge produces at first a still more earnest and profound doubt of a practical kind.

1. Doubt which is perplexed about Christian or religious faith in general *must* of necessity become practical. Either a breach is made with religion and religious conduct, or doubt turns its ethico-religious attention upon itself, and primarily to one's own person. That it do become practical, is demanded by the nature of man, whose urgent need is to attain to unity and harmony with himself by some means or other, and to extrude whatever hinders that end. The former method is now morally inaccessible. If the moral sense unites itself by preference with the religious impulse, as may be morally required, and if the religious sense thus asserts itself, this union leads to the second method, to the second form, in which doubt becomes practical. We proceed to the verification of these positions.

2. Schelling says once that no philosophy deserving of the name has any wish to be irreligious or immoral. If a philosophy which denies the distinction between God and the world, which denies either God or the world, not merely violates religion and morals, but also does an injury to itself, and digs its own grave, it also follows that doubt in Christianity which rests upon such a philosophy, has not a firm

basis, and there is in such philosophy neither a moral nor a religious justification for refusing to cherish the religious impulse. There are few in our days who wholly surrender themselves to one or the other philosophic system; an eclectic course is much more frequent, inasmuch as the spiritual atmosphere of our so-called educated world is compounded of elements of different systems in all sorts of combinations. In spite of this fact our proposition holds good,—that every mode of thought which is inimical to religion and morals is also unable to stand the test of scientific proof, but has in itself the elements of decay, and is precluded from a consistent structure of thought, such as the reasoning spirit craves which is in search of unity with itself, and is unwilling to lead a vagrant life in the midst of contradiction and without definite abode. This state of mind already becomes a kind of *ἀναγώνη* for the sacred right of morals and religion. We have also positively recognised the essential connection between thought which would become knowledge, and Ethics (§§ 4; 9, 5). But the moral, once acknowledged, also necessarily leads to the recognition of the religious, and of the religious impulse, and therefore leads to the acknowledgment of the duty to foster religious endeavour as well as moral. Morality embraces the command to become associated with what is good. But the good is a unity; I can therefore only desire single acts of good, because the good in general is to be desired,—indeed, in desiring one single good thing, because it is good, the good as a universal is already constructed and desired. But religion, at least as Christianity would have it, is absolutely in universal unity with the original good. Consequently, the rejection of religion could only be the rejection of the unity with the original good, and could not therefore arise from the interests of morals. Rather, he who desires what is ethical cannot forsake God, who is the original ethical Being, without self-contradiction. In that way the connection between morals and religion in general is re-established. It is the task, therefore, of what remains of conscience to foster the religious impulse, so far as that is directed towards the primarily moral, which is not to be sought for in the world, since it is agreed that the distinction between God and the world, without detracting from their internal and passive relation to one

another, is to be held fast, and that Monism, either in its acosmistic or pancosmistic form, is untenable. It may not be asserted, that according to the preceding remarks a verification of religion sufficiently positive and scientific is already conceded, but the following assertion may well be made. So many obscurities and difficulties may confront the subject at the standpoint of religious doubt, that it may be suggested to him on theoretic and ethical grounds not to break with religion generally, but to persevere in the endeavour after true religion. The doubter has to confront the thesis that religion is superfluous, and also the thesis which regards religion as initially impossible and the divine unattainable.

Those only can regard religion as *superfluous* who would put off the religious impulse with false substitutes. The various spheres outside of religion may be looked upon as such substitutes, viz. Science, philosophical or empirical; Art; the life of the citizen or the politician. There are men to whom the harmonies of music are a substitute for religion; as to others, the constructive arts, poetry or the theatre, that which is æsthetic, are a substitute. Others again treat religion as a universal but simply pathologic appetite, which demands satisfaction as well as other appetites. Urged by this appetite, the phantasy sketches certain mental representations of a religious kind, which have their justification apart from objective truth, if they merely do us the service of contenting us. It is the parts of religious feelings or representations, not to discover truth or untruth, but to find out subjective representations which accord the sense of peace or harmony. But religion must manifestly die outright from the moment the pious man is compelled to say that the mental representations upon which he rests are the mere plays of phantasy. Religion is no sport, but the realm of the deepest earnestness; it is a holy land. Whence also could an ethical logic have place if it relied upon a harmony essentially untrue and based upon untruth? or held such a harmony compatible with the simple reasoning faculty of man? Such tolerance, bestowed out of sympathy so to speak with our weakness, dishonours religion; it must also dishonour the earnestness of science. Nor may agreeable and happy feelings be substituted for religion. Religion has by no means to do with merely personal happiness, for

it has not simply to do with man himself, but with God; not simply with enjoyment or with the selfish pleasure of certain romanticists, but also with the hallowing of the name of God, with the divine honour and praise, and with the correct relation between God and the soul. To attribute everything to a divine pleasure is to give grounds for Feuerbach's reproach, which regards religion as a finer kind of egotism. As far as those spheres of life are concerned which exist side by side with religion, they may of course be permeated by a kind of religious pathos or enthusiasm, and be carried on or solemnized by a kind of cultus of offerings and self-surrender. If such cultus is pursued in earnest, we have in a new form the deifications which were predominant in Heathenism. But it is arbitrary to erect into religion (*verabsolutiren*) either science or art, the life of the citizen or the life of the politician; and where the religious impulse asserts itself, it is aware also that it does not find in that sphere with which it has to do communion with the holy and divine itself, with the real and original source of the principles of all those spheres, and it rejects (with still more right than it rejected faith as it was previously known) the indemnification in question for Christian faith, the endeavour to treat as religion what is not religion; for the right way is to treat every sphere according to its essence.

But to accept the *impossibility* of religion is also unjustified. Many think, indeed, that if doubts have entered their minds upon religion, especially upon the Christian religion, upon miracles or upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, and if this earlier historic faith has disappeared, this loss must have the effect of suspending religious life until such a time as certainty upon everything has again been established in theoretic fashion. So long man is to live without God. But those doubts themselves, held in regard by the religious impulse, are a purely theoretic agitation. The religious impulse should, nay, must, still long for God, as the lungs long for air and the eyes for light. Only because of grievous sin can it happen that theoretic doubt snaps or smothers the religious impulse. We do not require of Art to make men wise and good. It is what it professes to be, if it performs its part in the realm of the beautiful. So also the subject who is troubled

by theoretic doubts must not expect religion to remove all theoretic doubts at the outset, and to give a theoretic peace as its first gift; religion requires and promises union with God. It is possible that out of this union when once attained there may flow side by side with other blessings this, that such a union should scatter doubt, as the light of the sun scatters clouds. Religion being indispensable to the spirit, to accept the impossibility of satisfying the religious need would be to say,—we are organized to experience a harassing contradiction. When sophistry says: "The divine is unattainable by us, it is too high," this opinion, if correct, must lead to base surrender to Pessimism or Indifferentism. In *religion* also as well as in knowledge, the moral disposition is to be desired which wishes to *foster the religious impulse* in the assurance that what is indispensable for us is also destined for us. It is thus morality which comprises the religious impulse, which does not permit attention to the thought of the superfluity or impossibility of religion. But how is the religious life to be retained and nourished; how is the search after religious certainty to be kept moving?

3. Even if it is acknowledged that the religious sense cannot die, but must live, the subject may seek so to comport himself towards that sense that he follows some self-selected paths which have no relation to truth, and therefore do not conduct to the desired goal. It may be that, in no indifference to objective truth, he forms for himself certain ideas of God, and presupposes their truth; perhaps he constructs a "natural religion," under the influence of its reasonableness; and familiar with these ideas in thought or even practice, he believes he now has religion. But at this point—as Heathendom demonstrates—the danger menaces of arbitrariness and subjectivity, although unconscious. Then the statements of those who appeal to their empirical reason deviate endlessly from each other because of their varying experiences, and what is contradictory cannot at the same time be true. Even if judgments and ideas are faultless of themselves, it is still manifest that ideas and systems of ideas do not afford what religion desires. Religion addresses itself to a living communion with and experience of Him in whom we live and move and have our being, not to a mere

one-sided relation of man to the divine Being as represented objectively to the mind. The inability of the so-called religion of reason, according to the testimony of experience, to get together an assembly of professors who think alike, which inability in one view is dependent upon the variety of the empirical reason in the various thinkers, must render the subject uncertain as to ideas which are self-created only; but to hold fast to these ideas as if they were objective truth, irrespectively of faith in the objective value of these ideas, is folly, and must end in a mere holding fast to one's own opinion. If, now, it is recognised that the unsophisticated religious impulse has not merely to do with ideas, whether our own or of others, whether true or false, nor with mere occupation with oneself or one's own mental products, but has to do with the living God, with *reciprocal* divine communion, and thus has to do with the divine attestation, then the spirit, which in its thirst after God is alienated from the previous histories which describe themselves as divine revelations, may take the direction of expecting new revelations. To that class belong in part those who speak of a "Religion of the Future," or of a "New and Eternal Gospel." But since the new revelation stays, and the religious impulse, in eternal absence of satisfaction, cannot consume itself in bare passive expectation, and, on the other hand, the methods of false mysticism and fanaticism, which would wrest new divine attestations or instillations in an unhistoric, abrupt, and violent manner, are really instances of an activity which is arbitrary and deficient in humility, the question demands a hearing as to whether the subject himself, the doubter, the stranger to religion, has conducted himself hitherto conformably to the religious impulse? whether there may not lie at his door the sin of religious discontent?

4. We are thus again brought back to the ethical principle, which, increasingly incorporating itself with the religious impulse, is able to impart to the onward movement a new and eternally effective impetus. But the religious impulse is ethically determined, in proportion as criticism or doubt is no longer first directed towards this or that objective fact, be it doctrine or history, and is also no longer directed simply and generally to the previous one-sided theoretic position of the



doubter, but is turned upon the subject himself, upon the idea of his own excellence and purity. In that case there can be no failure; it is soon recognised that he is no *integrares*; a bitter knowledge, but an initial stage to standing upon truth as a matter of practice and of fact. The first certainty we agree upon is the knowledge that we are not what we should be. And now the question arises, How is improvement to come? How is that work to be commenced, absolutely the life-work, which demands the whole strength of the will and its whole endeavour? Here also manifold errors are possible. The interlacing of morals and religion is not completed at a stroke. Perverse tendencies unconsciously operate, even though that bitter self-knowledge has begun; aberrations or falsifications of the religious impulse may insinuate themselves in the garb and name of the ethical principle. They will be penetrated and vanquished by honesty. The possible aberrations are the faults resulting from being venturesome or timorous, the faults of moral superficiality and precipitate self-satisfaction, or of lack of courage; they are thus faults of a Pelagianizing or Manichæanizing character. As far as the first fault is concerned, there must be no detention by the thought, that when any one is seized by a moral ideal which raises a new world before his eyes, he may please and content himself with that ideal, by the thought that he *thinks* of that higher stage, and so may have an ideal delight therein (Rom. vii. 22). Such substitution of thought for being and will is evidence of the dulness of the moral sense and impulse. But even where the will is brought into action, it may happen that a merit may be made of good intentions and resolutions, and the arbitrary assumption be made that God will take the will for the deed. But the moral principle does not permit us to be contented with a will to do good, which is at the same time powerless, or allows itself to do wrong from other motives. The moral sense is rightly shy of allowing itself any indulgence. Further, whoever remains satisfied with good moral resolutions merely, and is thus only united with God by the bond of the law or of the will of the divine Ruler, but is not united with God Himself, as religion requires, that man remains in external relation to Him; to that man

there remains in no sparse fashion, as compared with God as the Lawgiver and Judge, the experience as to how great a distance there is between the moral ideal and the empirical realization of the Ego, how great is the step from volition to fact. He gains the experience how the Ego continually changes and "wavers between its archetype and its caricature." If these experiences have been of long duration, if good resolutions as well as unfaithfulness and weakness have been often repeated, the end of Pelagian fickleness, which has not counted the cost of bringing its intention to completion (Luke xiv. 28), is easily reached by a second return to a *despair* of the higher purpose and endeavour of life (a despair related to Manichæism and Pessimism). Sophistry now says: Pure virtue is, like God, too high for us, is unattainable; and therefore man may be advised to a base submission, to an insipid existence without swing and without high and earnest aim, in a tepid and torpid temperature, in which all the germs of nobler life in the inner man become withered (Rev. iii. 14).

But even where this stage is not reached, the proper interweaving of the ethical and the religious may be opposed by a *self-accusation* which hinders advance to reconciliation. The Ego, in its criticism of itself, may divide into an accuser and an accused, and be unwilling to cease this self-accusation; it may persevere and rest in that accusation, because it finds a secret pleasure in it. Here belong the manifold forms of a negative discipline, which proceeds as if pain was itself pleasant to God, and meritorious. Yet in this seeming austerity of self-accusation there is, nevertheless, a laxity, a Pelagianism included, since the subject regards that self-accusation as the means for his reconciliation, as his penance, as his pride, as a good work. And if he remains in that position, the consequence is that the deceitful heart cherishes that pain as the source of joy, ignoring morality alike in pain and in joy. Such a state of things is not found in the phenomena of Catholicism only, where it is regarded as legalized to a certain degree; a morbid persistence in the consciousness of sin, and in a painful penitence which regards itself as praiseworthy, may appear upon Evangelical ground. And just as similar phenomena are met with in

heathen religions, so also in the profane literature of more recent times we have lived to see a selfishly pleasurable forlornness which takes credit to itself for its pain, assume a form as superficial as belauded in the so-called *Weltschmerz*, or Sorrow for the Universe. But the deceitfulness of the heart is made manifest thereby. Such pain, untrue in its very nature, poisons the moral consciousness. The austerity of self-judgment is an empty semblance, since the Ego in its self-judgment simulates itself to be noble and takes pleasure in its act. It comes, therefore, to this, that the natural man submit himself in his entirety and unity to the judgment of God, of whom the conscience makes him aware, but do not divide himself dualistically into two men, one of whom is good and noble. The ideal man, in short, is no fact, only a desire; but the ideal man claims the whole natural man, and incites him to seek reconciliation otherwise than in that double nature.

5. Where now, as contrasted with these aberrations, the religious impulse cleaves firmly to its ethical direction, the candid man knows himself and acknowledges himself to be a guilty sinner. At that moment he begins to stand in the world of truth, and to possess a certainty of an ethico-religious, although a painful character. That certainty is of a no mere negative kind, but impels forwards. The religious impulse which has blended with morality knows how to estimate at a different rate than previously the value and the necessity of living communion with God. Now that the high and pure image of Godlikeness to which he is called has entered into his heart, he can understand the Psalmist for the first time, and can say with him: "My soul thirsts after God, after the living God: when shall I come and see the face of God?" Or with Augustine: "My soul is restless till it finds rest in Thee." The consciousness of sin and guilt, aroused step by step with the consciousness of high personal purpose, is indeed a consciousness also of alienation and separation from God. But that consciousness of alienation can only sharpen and deepen the longing for union with God until it becomes the most living desire for reconciliation. And the combined moral and religious sense thus awakened knows well that it is unable of itself to give, or to demand, or to gain

by importunity this reconciliation ; it is directed to that divine act which can alone forgive sin, and open the heaven of divine communion. Then the question becomes justified and imperative : Is there not somewhere a true religion, a religion of reconciliation, without which the awakened religious sense cannot live ? If the pre-Christian age could live long upon hope, because consciousness had not yet received its deepest impressions, or because it relied upon the divine promise and patiently awaited the new covenant, as the realization of which Christianity came, in like manner within the pale of Christian teaching the consciousness which is occupied with internal disunion necessarily and involuntarily assumes a form in the more earnest souls more intense, more painful, and more anxious for salvation than in the days before Christ. But as they earnestly seek a religion of reconciliation, there can be no doubt it is to be found either nowhere or else in that religion which alone and expressly claims to be the religion of peace with God. They stand apart even now, it may be, from that religion, and yet there is a great difference as compared with the time when they went astray in historic faith. Then they did not ask for a religion of reconciliation. Now, on the other hand, new religious wants and an earnest moral sense are awakened within them, and a simple abiding by the old determination of rejection would be wholly unjustified. Christianity, they are compelled to say to themselves, may perhaps appear in quite another light if, dowered with their new experiences and needs, they are willing to cast upon it a searching glance. Thus doubt and self-examination must direct themselves to the position previously held towards Christianity.

## SECOND ARTICLE.

§ 11.—*Transition from Religious Doubt to Religious Certainty. Godly Sorrow, or the Repentance not to be repented of.* (2 Cor. vii. 10.)

When sorrow for self has, by the combined moral and religious process, arrived at doubt of salvation or of life, a faculty

for the understanding and reception of the gospel message is disclosed, which rejects all self-justification of the sinner, but also translates into the region of the divine forgiveness, as well as ratifies self-condemnation, and promises to faith in Christ the certainty of justification. Being penetrated now with humility and courage by virtue of the preaching of Christ, with despair in oneself and with trust in God for living unity, the act of faith becomes possible, morally necessary, and effective, which inwardly appropriates the gospel, and to which the gospel commends itself by a most peculiar experience, as the power of salvation and as the truth, which becomes the basis of a new mode of being and of consciousness, viz. divine kinship.

1. Painful as was candid self-knowledge, and little as sorrow for self and the consciousness of alienation from the holy and righteous God of themselves effect or are reconciliation, nevertheless there is already revealed in those feelings more *internal* homogeneity with the purpose of Christianity than the stage of mere historic faith possessed, which after all had no internal relation with Christianity. For in how different a position the man now stands than when he broke with historic faith! Then, perhaps, Christianity appeared to him as a mere dead heap of propositions which oppressed the spirit, or as a heterogeneous message which interrupted the joy and security of the self-satisfied conscience; now, the true religion is sought, and it is recognised that, to be the true religion, it must be the religion of reconciliation; and the subject stands a second time before Christianity and asks the question: "Since I cannot live without religion and communion with God, and I am lost to the noblest and best parts of my nature, art thou not the religion of true and reconciling communion with God? Canst thou not and wilt thou not become mine, my faith and my love?" And in the question whether Christianity is the religion needed, the wish is already present that it may be so, and the inclination is present to believe. At the same time, a positive position is again assumed to Christianity, and a turning-point is gained

which demands surrender to the objective view of Christianity and of Christ. The power of Christianity over others, and the peace it gives them, will not be questioned now ; the only thing wanting is personal certainty of its truth. But as compared with the stage of historic faith, a further advantage is gained, a threefold advantage,—*enlightenment as to* personal imperfection and *sin*, or as to the need of atonement ; enlightenment as to what constitutes the *core and centre of Christianity*, if it is to do what the religious impulse requires ; finally, an open eye for a *person or a work* in whom the spirit of atonement, the peace of God, lives, in whom the subject may assume the actual possession and delight in the highest good, a living communion with God,—and thus an opened sense for any trace of the divine action, combined with an endeavour to share the same. Now the soul knows what is decisive ; it can distinguish the centre from the periphery ; it knows how to take up its position to Christianity accordingly,—that is to say, it knows where union is to be first sought, and what may depend upon itself in the first instance.

2. The important thing for actual advance to the career which thus opens lies here, that the living religious impulse thus awakened should not continue subjective, since that would be to live upon itself, or rather to spend itself upon itself ; but that the subject should discover the road to an objective religion, and in the last resort to the living God, who declares Himself in His acts, but without losing his freedom or resigning himself in a mere external manner to the material presented to his faith ; he should espouse himself by preference and choice to that material.

But hindrances will again stand in the way of such resort to the world of religious objectivity, hindrances to be obviated by perseverance and honesty. The soul that longs for a living communion with God does not know at once how to find the significance of history for religion ; it may believe that history, being past and gone, can have no decisive influence in religious matters ; the divine may assert its spirituality only as something apart from history. The understanding, further, may assert, in opposition to a divine approach and condescension in the historical such as Christianity teaches, the sublimity and infinitude of God, and even His unchange-

ableness. Everything outward may seem too mean and unworthy to be the organ or medium of the divine grace, or even a circuitous road for doing anything for the spirit. Thus every external objective and historical revelation of God, every manifestation such as an interworking or appearance of God in history, may appear impossible, and especially the incarnation of God in Christ; and piety may thus think itself compelled to remain in a non-historical, spiritualistic, false, and mystic temper. But this objection has no right to hinder the advance of the striver after religious certainty. The Mysticism of the Middle Ages already recognised: "Where inwardness becomes outwardness, there inwardness becomes inward, for there inwardness becomes inwardness" (H. Suso). External reality is not necessarily unspiritual, non-spiritual, or contra-spiritual; it may even present the energy of the spiritual itself as directed towards realization in the world. History may express something eternal, and have an eternal value, which renews its youth, so to speak, for every receptive mind; and, indeed, piety itself does not desire merely the past deeds of God, and just as little desires a knowledge of abstract principles of the divine plan of salvation; but, because it longs for living communion with God, it longs after those divine deeds which are renewed for and within the subject, which give him an objective security, and which have not simply to do with subjective imaginations and thoughts. The normal religious impulse is not simply directed towards a divine Being who is eternally the same, but to the Being of God, in so far as that Being is the principle of the divine acts,—of the loving meeting of God with men. So also the representation of a God who is shut out from freedom and from the world by His very majesty is an arbitrary representation; His infinity would be straightway made finite, if the world stood over against Him as an insuperable limitation, so that He was unable to prove Himself living in the world. As has been said, the pious man has to do with a personal participation in the divine favour. In the case supposed, God and His grace, as far as individuals are concerned, would be incomprehensible in their omnipresence and in their free movement over the universe; and just because His grace is omnipresent, it is, in that case, in-

some degree non-existent for the subject, and man would never be glad of it as of a thing directed towards himself. But all this receives still greater importance because of the consciousness of sin, which drives us far from God, unless He approaches in forgiveness. Thus, then, the infinite and omnipresent God, as Luther says, and as Christianity teaches, must make Himself cognizable to us; and the eternal Word, which moves above us in His infinity, must become a historical force and manifest Himself in time, in order to have access to individuals and give access to Himself. It is necessary for man, unique historical being as he is, that the divine pity should enter into his sphere, and without losing itself condescend to the individuality of space and time. Instead of allowing itself to be severed from man by this limitation, it will be able to employ the finite, together with space and time, to reveal and impart itself. Thus the subject, no longer misled by the objections of the understanding to the *possibility* of God's intervention in space and time, and of God's transforming the outward and finite into an organ for revealing and communicating Himself, will have to survey the sphere of Christendom, and to see where pure and certain traces may be found of the divine approach and acts, able to minister to the support and satisfaction of his religious need. For to accept the impossibility of coming into union with God by means of the objective and historical, may be called asserting the impossibility of religion.

3. Within Christendom there are presented these three things which may be the organs or vehicles of divine communion, or of the representation of the divine nearness to men,—viz. *the religious community*, whether it exist in free and social form or organized into a Church; next, *the Holy Scriptures* as monuments or records of divine revelation, or of the Word of God to men; and finally, *holy acts* of a symbolic kind, which, being divinely instituted, promise that there is blended with them for the receptive soul a divine impartation, i.e. *the Sacraments*. Each of these three has an essential defect, but each has a power of peculiar influence, by means of which what is wanting in the others is supplied, so that a co-operation of the three is requisite for a normal course and arrival at the goal.



It is certainly natural and wholesome for the subject, whose eyes are beginning to see the highest good in atonement and divine communion, to seek *fellowship* with the religious community or the Church, and especially with such of its members as bear about them the traces of the divine Spirit and the divine peace, and thus approve themselves living monuments of the present power of Christianity. The minor surrenders himself to the guidance and the example of the mature religious spirit (§ 6), in order that authority may effect, as the word implies, an *increase*. But human fellowship and the Church cannot create a religious personality, nor impart to the soul communion with God and the certainty of such fellowship. They rather impart impulse and guidance for the attainment of that certainty which all living members must have, and which can alone impart decisive content. If the Church regards itself as the goal, it puts itself in the place of God; it initially denies religious development its crown, and cleaves to the stage of legality. If the subject again desires to lull himself by trusting in the Church, he forgets that in the things of eternal salvation it will not do to rely upon human words, but only upon the divine witness,<sup>1</sup> and that in religion there must not be a surrender to man, but to the living God. Indeed, seeing that the Christian Confessions are controverted, and reproach each other with the defilement of Christendom, and that the spirit of peace and reconciliation, which attracts the awakened religious impulse, is referred back by all Confessions to Christ as the source, and finally, that the monument of pure tradition from Christ is found by all in the Holy Scriptures, the subject is himself brought in contact with this most original and most certain record, and has to seek Christ in the Holy Scriptures as He is painted there. In order not to accept the human as divine, nor to fall back upon the standpoint which knows nothing higher than submission to the community, the subject will not betake himself to the Church without measuring it with original Christianity, the monument of which is the Scriptures. It is quite congruous with this that *the Christian community should evoke a prepossessing impression of the real power and trustworthiness of Christianity,*

<sup>1</sup> John iv. 42, v. 35.

of its eternal youth, so to speak, and its power of rejuvenescence.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, according to the never quite to be relinquished standard of the Christian Confessions, the Holy Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, are to be regarded as the object to which he must turn who would decide the question as to whether pure Christianity is the truth and the religion able to appease the heart that is in search of God, and who would apprehend Him in His historical acts. It is true, the doubt immediately arises, especially at the present time, whether the New Testament Scriptures are trustworthy, and therefore whether the soul may trust to the gospel for its salvation? And if attention is withdrawn from the fact on which the gospel depends to individual points of all sorts,—of a historical, critical, or apologetic nature not decisive for salvation,—that would be a simple return to the theoretic inquiries of the time of the old Supernaturalism and Rationalism, which could never surely settle in the most favourable circumstances whether Christianity was the religion of reconciliation, or was actually the religious truth upon which man may rely when he had reached the position we are treating of. What he wants is to know how to appreciate authentic and original Christianity according to its internal work; and therefore, because he has to do with the authentic and original, with that Christianity by means of which Christendom has survived from its commencement, he turns in an inquiring mood to the Holy Scriptures, hoping himself to experience the salvation they proclaim. To resolve and decide this question, there is no need of many learned postulates and disputable historic convictions. As far as trustworthiness is concerned, the undeniable fact is at first sufficient that Jesus Christ is the founder of the Christian Church; and that, as even the most extreme negative criticism allows, He is a person distinguished by a unique moral and religious dignity which commends Him to our confidence and reverence. That fact remains true, even if the presupposition does not already attach to the Scriptures of their inspiration or of their credibility in all single points,

<sup>1</sup> Compare V. d. Goltz, *Die christlichen Grundwahrheiten*, 1873, pp. 25, etc. Instead of a normative attitude of the Church, the Word—testimony, guidance by example—is to be preferred.

just as the conviction may also be absent that there rests in Jesus Christ the divine power of redemption and perfection,—a conviction which, as we saw, Biblical Supernaturalism trusted to have formed by proof. The subject cannot possibly have somehow acquired these certainties or convictions before he has brought himself in closer contact with the *contents* of the evangelical proclamation. The procedure of the Apostle Paul is instructive for all times. The heathen were unable to bring with them a certainty of the apostle's inspiration or of the truth of his evangelical statement; nor did he desire at the outset a faith in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, nor in history apart from its saving reference: he preached repentance and forgiveness of sins to the repentant for Christ's sake; and those who accepted such proclamation, on the ground of experience of the saving power of Christianity became certain on both points—as to the core of the evangelical history of Christ which he proclaimed, and as to the credibility and authority of the apostle. In these days, also, the subject who would perceive whether Christianity is the religion of reconciliation should not meddle with the labyrinth of discussions upon all the individual historic points to start with, however important these discussions may be in their place. With an open eye for what must be the central-point and decisive element in the Scriptures, if Christianity professes to be *the* religion, the man has in fact learnt to let the derivative or peripheric become subordinate in comparison with the central, and to apply himself with all his power to the question which is paramount, and which also decides the value of the derivative and peripheric. He desires to hear pure and authentic Christianity express itself upon this main point, in order to arrive thereby at a decision upon Christianity itself. That pure and authentic Christianity is recorded in the Scriptures of the New Testament there can be no doubt. All Christian Confessions refer to the Scriptures as their original documents. He who wishes to know what Christianity, that magnitude in world-history, professes to be, must keep to the Scriptures. And even if questions upon what is the more original and ancient in these records, or upon the full canonicity of single parts, cannot be excluded at pleasure, yet these questions cannot here become troublesome. For in reference to that

with which man has to do in the position we are describing, in reference to the experience and internal certainty of the benignant power of Christianity, the voice of all the writings of the New Testament proclaims as from one mouth :—The source of salvation and the certainty of salvation is in Jesus Christ ; in the revelation of God in His person is contained the power of the redemption and perfection of the world, Grace and Truth, and faith enables us to participate in these blessings. Where, then, christologically regarded,—and with this point we are concerned,—is that pretended Ebionitic original Christianity to which Christ was merely a prophet and at the same time a sinful man ? Where is the Christ who referred men to their own strength, or taught that they did not need Him as a physician, possibly because God is eternally reconciled with the sinner, and there is therefore no need of atonement ? The entire testimony of the Early Church concerning Christ, so far as we have it according to the standpoint of negative criticism itself, is at one upon the point before us,—in the acknowledgment that in Jesus, whose pure and holy example recommends itself to the confidence and love of every one susceptible of anything higher, has appeared the Redeemer of the world, as He testifies of Himself.<sup>1</sup> And a transformed world bears testimony to Him, as well as the enthusiasm of those who are His, and the grateful love, stronger than death, which He infused into His own, and the flame of which still lives to-day in those who have been willing to sink their own aims at the contemplation of His person, and to make trial of His promises. Therefore he who really desires historical traces of a divine life and of divine acts, in order to obtain a share in turn of the eternal love of God which has revealed itself therein in this mortal sphere, need not allow doubts to awaken or become renewed because of critical objections, which might keep him from becoming familiar with the documents of Christianity, and from devoting his whole attention to the manifestation of Christ ; all that is necessary is, surrendering himself to that picture as it is painted everywhere harmoniously for us in the New Testament, to allow the rays of Deity which emanate thence to work their work upon

<sup>1</sup> Quite apart from other testimonies, the words at the institution of the Lord's Supper, which are genuine beyond doubt, are decisive.

him as he looks on in love. The process of criticism need not in any way hinder. On the contrary, the history of the more recent critical investigations utters the warning, and thus it unconsciously renders a service to faith, not to run off into relatively unimportant matters, but to fix the eyes upon the core and centre of Scripture, Jesus Christ, by which means faith asserts its independence of the wavering course of learned critical investigations. Room must be left for these, however, in order that faith may have a powerful motive for seeking a higher form of certainty than mere historic faith in its dependence upon doubts, which come and go, can have; and this leads to the third point.

This is the *Sacrament* which is combined with the Word of Christ. The original message of Christianity, which places the image of Christ before our eyes, will not have us regard Christ as a vanished greatness. Otherwise we could not have Him personally as our Redeemer and Reconciler. The Word teaches His abiding importance; it represents Him as "yesterday, to-day, and for ever," interceding with God on our behalf, in order to apply to us the forgiveness of sins and atonement. At the same time, it requires us to enter into living fellowship with Him, by means of the Spirit who accompanies the Word and draws to Him. But at this point a defect in the Word becomes manifest which calls for a complement. The Word of Scripture mentions no one by name, and applies itself to no one personally with the grace it promises; it passes equally upon all who hear it. Nor has the person the certainty of being able to apply confidently to himself the words of the divine favour, since, side by side with promises and alluring words, the Word has also chastising, threatening, and demanding words, and does not say which the subject may and can take to himself. We may surrender ourselves to the contemplation of the Person of Christ contained in the Scriptures, and may consider in wonderment how eighteen centuries ago He lived and spoke and lovingly worked for man, and suffered at his hands, without becoming glad at our personal salvation, and without being able to celebrate the day of the resurrection of a new man in us. We may in that way come to the conviction that others have attained that good; but we do not for that reason personally possess it. If self-denying trust in Christ is

to be possible, Christ must be a living and exalted Christ, and must approve Himself to us as such. How different it was once when Jesus said to a particular man, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," or, "Go thy way and sin no more!" But this personal need has not escaped Him who would be our Mediator; and He has therefore instituted those sacred acts, and has committed them to the Church, in which, in virtue of His authentic and original words, we may see the continuation of His personal and loving will as it finds its way even into individual souls. The *institution* of Christianity has associated the Sacraments with the universal words of Christ, which without doubt are historically certain, as acts which, in combination with the words, are in His name and by His commission to be the channels of the presentation of free and complete grace to individuals, and from the fulness of which there may be drawn just what each one needs and is able to receive. Indeed, in the invitation to salvation they contain already the divine sentence, the divine judgment, that the divine love and the right of sonship shall personally avail.

Thus from indefinite efforts after God and His fellowship, from the merely internal region of the spirit, where the psychical and the pneumatical, the human and the divine, so easily commingle and beget self-delusions, Christianity calls off to the objective phenomena of Christianity visible (1) in the religious community, where the subject receives the impression that Christianity was and is a real and a universal motive power; from the Christian community of the *Church* Christianity calls (2) to the word of God in *Holy Scripture*, which opposes all spiritual semblance and error by its dividing force; thus, by means of the Word of God, Christianity calls (3) to those objective *institutions* which are serviceable for that vital and personal communion, which the Redeemer, as the exalted Head of His Church, desires to hold with His own and with each individually, in order to bestow the certainty of personal salvation, allied to the divine certainty of His dignity as Redeemer.

4. *Transition to religious certainty.*—For the subject who desires to follow the normal course from mere subjectivity to a divine objectivity, in which live the eternal powers of redemption, everything is ready on the objective side. His

advance depends upon seizing and affirming and appropriating the salvation offered, not simply as available for others, but for himself. The decisive crisis has come. But it is not brought to its full issue of itself, but by earnest labour and amid further temptations to deviation on either hand. For the building up of the inner man is a great work, the most sacred work. On the one hand, a *restless haste* and *impatience* to force religious feelings may endeavour to satisfy itself with religious imaginations, or may exercise itself in external, religious, or ecclesiastical practices, in religious *πολυπραγμοσύνη*, instead of simply directing the glance to the one thing needful, and seeking a quiet concentration of soul. It may happen that the illusion also arises simultaneously that such a course of action will produce desert of the divine fellowship, and merit it. The one thing still lacking is the childlike sense, which, in simplicity and patience, in a humility which grows with self-knowledge, in contemplation and prayer, calmly awaits the word of God.

But, on the other hand, the opposite fault, religious sloth and false self-sufficiency, may array itself in the garb of *humility*. That is the other form of unchildlike self-will. Man may consider it too great and wonderful a thing, that the majestic God should concern Himself with him, a single soul, and condescend to work upon him, although He may possibly do so upon others. If Christianity calls to the former, "Be converted, and become as children" (Matt. xviii. 3), it persuades the faint-heartedness, which arises, notwithstanding, from a weakness and sluggishness of the religious impulse, by the words, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. xi. 12). It holds some fast to make them humble, and others to make them courageous, by an increasing knowledge of sin, guilt, and the necessity of atonement, and by the continuous excision of all impure self-will. The objective force, which aims at bringing this about, is the two-edged Word accompanied by the power of the Spirit of God (Heb. iv. 13). Thus hindrances are increasingly removed; courage and humility exist side by side; and both are combined with that childlike disposition, without which the decisive act of faith is not possible which confidently grasps the Word and that peculiar salvation in the Word as presented in Scripture

or in Sacrament. How, then, is approach made to that act? In the childlike disposition there lies the ability to receive with increasing purity the image of Christ as in a living and faithful mirror of the mind. The image of Christ beheld in the Word grows warm, so to speak, to internal contemplation; and whilst, before, the eyes were, as it were, holden, and the letter was dead and, so to speak, a grave for Christ, Christ now stands before the spiritual eye. Although, in the view of the holiness of the Son of Man, the feeling of want, of sin, and of distance grows increasingly more acute, nevertheless the soul becomes increasingly unable to abandon the contemplation of Christ and the message of the love of God, which He proclaims and presents, only it does not venture as yet to refer to itself with precision this message of peace, and to appropriate it. Let this reference to self be completed arbitrarily or presumptuously, and the act of faith cannot take place with a good conscience. On the other hand, without the believing appropriation there can be no advance to the experience of faith and to the certainty united therewith. It might appear that the act of faith, that it be not arbitrary, should be made dependent upon the condition that the man, before he perfects it, should have a certainty both of Christ's ability to redeem, and of His loving intention towards us, since this act must be controlled by conviction, unless it is blind and self-effected. As opposed to such a condition, Christian doctrine and experience is just this,—that we can only participate in a new consciousness and the certainty both of personal salvation and of the dignity of Christ, by means of the contents of Christianity as apprehended in faith, *i.e.* by means of Christ. How are we to escape from the circle, according to which what authorizes the act of faith is just that certainty apparently which is promised, on the other hand, only to the completed act of faith? The answer is, that a distinction is to be made between the faith which accepts or grasps, and the faith which possesses and experiences. Only the latter is rejoicing faith, divinely certain of its facts. The former is the act of trust, which cannot of course arise without a conviction of its legitimacy and obligation. But in having such trust even, we are morally completely justified, indeed, we are obliged to hold it, if the subject-matter, which claims our trust,



our innermost nature, addresses the best longing of the spirit, which feels itself to be without peace, helpless and distracted, and addresses it in such a way that the definite presentiment is formed that here, if anywhere, is the salvation we need. Thence grows the consciousness of the duty not to refuse that trust. It is the Father drawing to the Son. If, therefore, the heart only remains upright and the endeavour living, the inward need of the consciousness of sin and guilt, and the knowledge of Christ which increasingly unfolds, urge to the confidence or the trust that these two things, Christ and our need, exist for each other. And thus, under the assent of the conscience and in presence of its open eye, the call of the Church, of the Word, and of the Institutions of Christ (or the divine Spirit and His preventing work through them) urge to the act of faith, by means of which we receive Christianity within us, and Christianity is now able to bestow the experience of its power and truth. The ripened, vital, childlike receptivity, and the holy, living fulness of love now strike in the innermost centre of the personality a new-creating spark of life, and he who was apprehended by preventing grace now apprehends and possesses (John iv. 14; Phil. iii. 12). Appropriated Christianity may now work what it will,—the new consciousness, the divine adoption, indeed the new being, the new creature. The eternal atonement reaching down to the deepest foundation of the conscience is now found. Living in time, the believer now knows himself to be living in the eternal life, knows the heavens open above him, and in the heavens his Father (John iv. 14, vi. 47, xi. 25, i. 52). Out of a doubting and divided being he has now become in his innermost nature one (Jas. i. 4, 18). For he participates in Him who is in His person the principle of the union of all oppositions in the universe (Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10). He knows himself to be united with the centre of all truth in heaven and on earth, and has now found the most precious treasure, religious certainty of the Christian salvation, the *fides divina*.

5. *Christian certainty, according to form and contents.*—Christian certainty is the divinely effected certainty that we are known, loved, and reconciled by God (1 Cor. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9), since He regards us in Christ; still, according to form and contents, it embraces certain limitations. First, the

*formal.* The nerve of the matter lies here, that it is no mere external divine testimony which comes to us through the Church, through Word and Sacrament. For what help can that be which remains outside our certain knowledge! So also the nerve lies in this, that it is no mere subjective testimony of the individual spirit which so readily deludes, and which might infer its personal justification or election from its moral renewal possibly, or from the strength and purity of its new life: for how insecure would be a state of repose which simply rested upon our moral perfection! But, thirdly, the nerve of the matter does not lie here, that both exist side by side, the outward and objective testimony and the personal and subjective spirit; it lies here, that both, the genuinely objective and the subjective, are brought into one, and thus into a *bond of unity*, by virtue of which our certainty knows itself to be grounded in objective Christian truth that makes itself evident and authoritative to the spirit.<sup>1</sup> Thus it, *in the first place*, comes to pass that the peculiar testimony of our spirit becomes subjective-objective, namely, it includes the knowledge that we are acknowledged by God in Christ, and are loved as His own,—that our self-consciousness or judgment has recognised the judgment of God concerning us, corresponds with the divine judgment, indeed is its effect, and therefore contains, at the same time, the testimony of God. *Secondly*, it comes to pass that the testimony of the Holy Spirit does not make itself known in Church and Word and Sacrament only, but also becomes subjective, thus is of an objective-subjective nature, inasmuch as the saving contents objectively presented in Word and Sacrament are written, so to speak, upon the heart, the thoughts of God concerning us are put within us, a new consciousness is implanted, and a new being is given to us as well as a new knowledge (1 John v. 11; Rom. viii. 16; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30). Both testimonies, that of the *self-consciousness* and the objective testimony perceived by the *God-consciousness*, must become one; there must be that *συμμετρίαι* of which Rom. viii. 16 and 1 John v. 6 speak.

<sup>1</sup> We have seen (§ 3) that even upon the objective side everything depends upon the bond of unity between the divine and human. That bond must also be repeated upon the subjective side, in order that a copy produced by reception may exist of that archetypal and complete unity.

This symphony, this marriage of the divine and the human, is the sealing (2 Cor. i. 32; Eph. i. 13, iv. 30).

But the religious certainty of faith is also a knowledge of *contents*, of truth, and is directly conscious thereof. Its contents afford a new consciousness of God and of self—indeed, a new view of the world, in embryo. We have not merely to speak of ourselves, our nature, our feelings; there is also in faith a consciousness of its object. The object of which faith is certain is God firstly, namely, as He is manifest in Christ, *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια*, or God in Christ as the real present and saving potency of love, God as the holy energy of love (1 John iv. 16; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5). This object is not an abstract and purely objective knowledge of God as a holy and loving being, or of a revelation of Christ as dead and gone and self-contained; God is known as the living God, who thinks of us, loves us, and knows His own. So, just as there is in faith a *new consciousness of God*, there is also a *new self-consciousness*, which knows itself in God. We know ourselves as eternally apprehended of God and loved by Him; we know, so to speak, our pre-existence in God; we know ourselves as chosen and hidden in Christ. Starting thence, finally a *new view of the world* discloses itself. The natural world is no longer the true world. It would be dead and soulless but for the Spirit from above, who energizes it, and makes it a symbol and organ of the divine, to which it is related as means and material. But this new consciousness of God, of self, and of the world, is at the same time associated with the certainty that it and its harmony are not merely a subjective imagination, but are objectively true and divinely wrought. Faith knows infallibly that the Spirit, who reveals to us at once our adoption and the divine Fatherhood, and who glorifies Christ, is *truth* (1 John v. 8). For we know the truth by the presence of truth in the spirit, which truth makes itself evident as light does, and proves itself efficacious by contact with our spirit, imparting knowledge; and by contact with the Spirit of God, we know that the Spirit of God has imparted this certainty, which is therefore infallible (1 John v. 6).

If we embrace in one glance both the form and contents of faith, the religious certainty of ripened faith comprehends on the one hand the certainty that the objective testimony of God

given in Christianity is truth, and that this, received as truth into the subjective consciousness, is able to approve its credibility; and thus that testimony becomes an objective-subjective testimony. On the other hand, faith includes the certainty, that with the judgment of our faith we rest upon a divine foundation, we have apprehended the mind of God; and thus our personal testimony as to our divine relationship has at the same time a divine testimony, being thus subjective-objective.

*Observation.*—An analogy to this certainty is seen in *conscience*, in which also the voice of God becomes part of our personal knowledge; for the good, which God wills and thinks, makes itself evident in the conscience by its own agency, as ethical truth, as the thought of God. Only Christian faith, which Luther often calls the Christian conscience, is a union of the divine and human at a higher power; in faith lies the nodal point of the closest relations between God and man, and of man to himself.

6. In faith the marriage takes place with God in the Holy Spirit, who creates a firm because a divine consciousness. The knowledge of man is exalted to divine knowledge. It is divine as to its contents, for it knows God and His thoughts of love. But it is also divinely certain of these contents, without ceasing to be human. The divine knowledge, the divine thought of love, comes to be shared by man, in that the divine knowledge, which God has in us, imparts or creates knowledge by virtue of His love, and thus in such human knowledge of God, God is Himself present to give knowledge of Himself (John xiv. 21-23). The divine light now shines no longer merely upon man or into the darkness which comprehends it not, but it has begun to shine through the man himself, and to constitute him a shining light (2 Cor. iv. 6; 1 Thess. v. 5). In a higher sense than in the Old Testament the word of the Psalmist is fulfilled: "In Thy light we see light" (Ps. xxxvi. 10). It is nevertheless recognised even by human sages that there can only be talk of true and certain knowledge when knowledge is penetrated, indeed imparted, by truth which has become present in the spirit.

*Observation.*—This faith, the genesis of which we have now considered, is the so-called Evangelical Material Principle.

It is inseparably associated with the central point of documentary Christianity or with the Scriptures, the formal side of the Evangelical Principle (which is the norm of the Church as well as the record of the Institutions of Christ), partly because the Holy Scriptures secure the Christian object in its original purity to the Church, and partly because its fundamental contents are now accredited to the Christian as divine truth.

7. If we now look back upon the way we have travelled and survey the genesis of faith, the Christian contents have advanced from the more incomplete stages and erroneous forms of acceptance, to ever higher and purer ones. The authority of the Church and of ecclesiastical tradition could not keep us, because we had no assurance that they presented us with Christianity in its original form. But even that faith, which believed because of the authority of apostles and prophets who speak in the Holy Scriptures, had not yet arrived at that perfect intussusception which the Christian object requires in order to bestow certainty of itself. The heart may still be estranged from the object; and if that mutual and still unvanquished estrangement comes into consciousness, there also arises a consciousness of disunion or doubt, whether of the object or of self, and the correctness of the attitude towards the object. Then comes the temptation for the educated in our time to trust themselves by preference to philosophy, in order to supply the lost religious certainty by a scientific certainty, either by means of a philosophic system, or by the eclecticism of so-called culture, the popular philosophy; but the latter in its arbitrary procedure does not give the assurance of subjection to the power of truth, which is not self-contradictory. The systems may either abolish the distinction between God and the world, and surrender Duality for a false Monism, or they may recognise and affirm that distinction. The *former* cannot do what they would or what they promise. They are unable to conduct to a satisfactory unity and certainty, even if we ignore Materialism and pessimistic Nihilism; and, indeed, that is evident as to the two main forms possible, acosmistic Pantheism and atheistic Pancosmism. Both contradict Religion as well as Ethics; they offer, therefore, no resting-place at all for intellectual certainty. And finally, as far as those systems are

concerned which recognise a difference between God and the world, and thus recognise a Duality, the clearer they are as to their aims the less they claim to afford any substitute for religion and its certainty, seeing that it is not even morally permissible to put the intellectual in the place of religion. It rather follows from the recognition of that difference that there comes a sense of duty, and there is heard a challenge to cherish both the religious and the ethical impulse, and to seek their satisfaction. Where that satisfaction is earnestly sought, a longing after the self-revealing God is awakened; and if that longing breaks conscientiously through all temptations, it finds what it needs in Christianity, among the historical religions, by the instrumentality of a higher form of faith than the *fides historica*, by *evangelical saving faith*, to which a scientific knowledge is also appended (§§ 12, 13).

*Observation.*—It is scarcely necessary to remark, but we do so expressly to exclude all misunderstanding, that even without a breach with Christian objectivity, without a period of doubt, progress from a normal and pious commencement to actual religious certainty is thinkable, especially when the object sinks ever more deeply into the personality which is readily receptive and plastic, although this way is, in our days at least, more frequently closed. In such a case, the whole life moves more in the light of the divine grace, and presents a more restful flow and a purer surface. The New Testament presents types of both species of character, not merely a Thomas and a Paul, who arrive at the goal after opposition, but also a John. But even this second class are not destitute of struggles. The lesson to be learnt is self-depreciation; the lesson of trust in God through Christ is here the one problem, which is not resolved of itself, but only through the personal spiritual act, except that there is no knowledge of periods of perfect vacancy and extremest need.—On the other hand, those who arrive at the goal through extremes and doubts, and whose way is to be described as the most devious possible for arriving at faith in a higher sense in spite of the breach with historic faith, may derive from their course the blessing of a deeper experience, of a clearer consciousness of the unhappiness of life apart from God and Christ, and that fact may become a strong impulse to travel the more surely perhaps the right road themselves, as well as to teach others to take that road by virtue of the ability they develop of transporting themselves into the condition of others, and

of becoming all things to all men. It is the privilege and glory of Christian grace to transform even vanquished vices and errors into a lever to facilitate advance.

### THIRD ARTICLE.

#### § 12.—*Transition from the Christian Certainty of Faith to Scientific Certainty of the Truth of Christianity.*

By religious certainty the acquisition of scientific certainty is not forestalled; religious certainty affords the necessary presupposition for that certainty, or for the scientific knowledge of the verification of Christianity,—that is to say, of its self-verification.

1. Religious certainty of the love of God revealed in Christ not merely stands, as regards form or strength, on a par with every other certainty, but it is for the pious man the centre of all further certainty, because in it alone has he attained true and living certainty in union with God, and absolute fortification of his life-purpose in union with the known aim of Deity in the world. The Christian has his resting-place in steadiness of heart, because his faith has found a sure anchorage in truth, objective and divine, and is the certainty of that truth. Thus, then, objections may be made against advance to the scientific certainty of the contents of faith from the side of science and the side of faith. Science may say: "If faith would have us regard it at the outset as religious certainty of objective truth, not as mere opinion, and as the starting-point of our operations, our problem has been made unduly easy:—Since, as we of course maintain, religious certainty is not attested by scientific, but scientific certainty can only arise on the basis of religious, the scientific operation is initially fettered, and it is difficult to see what else worth mentioning it is possible or open to do." And it may also be doubted, from the standpoint of faith, whether everything which science could still offer is not given in faith either adequately or better,—whether knowledge indeed does not react detrimentally upon the life of faith.

Nevertheless, it is manifest that, as far as the objection is concerned made from the standpoint of science, there is no scientific verification of any matter, unless it is at least generally known what it is intended to verify or to apprehend in verification; otherwise, we commit ourselves to an aimless act. But an actual knowledge of Christianity is not possible, unless there is a transference into Christianity, and unless there is both ability and will to move in its atmosphere; and just as Christianity claims to be above every religion, so faith is the specific organ for seizing that religion according to its nature. Knowledge, therefore, cannot be first and faith second. In the earlier part of this introduction it has been sufficiently shown that this faith has no desire to be attested by demonstration, and the most industrious in knowledge are not therefore the most pious or clear-sighted in religion. Add to this, as we shall soon see, that scientific certainty is not identical with the certainty of faith, nor is it given with that certainty; its aim is a further one, valuable in itself and for the problem of Christianity, and by no means superfluous. If the superfluousness of science is maintained by faith, or if danger to the life of faith is apprehended, the remembrance of what has been previously said (§ 1) will serve for reply.

2. In Christ, and therefore in the faith which has accepted Him, all "the riches of wisdom and knowledge" are contained (Col. ii. 3). But faith holds those riches at first in a "hidden" or embryonic manner. Faith is itself simply the commencement of the new personality, of an endless and new development. It is a quick and swelling germ, which must first unfold itself; and part and parcel of that development is, amongst other things, an activity of knowledge, which always becomes more and more master of the contents of faith, faith forming the impulse thereto. Further, living faith is inwardly impelled and necessitated to apprehend itself as verified; and when this impulse is methodical, scientific certainty is added to the certainty of faith. It is not enough for faith merely to controvert attacks; its problem is to put itself in harmony with the whole world of volition and thought, out of which, so long as it is not ruled by Christian principles, ever new assaults and doubts may grow. Only in proportion as this happens

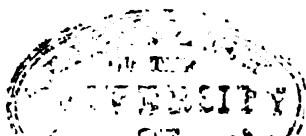


can faith approve itself in its fruitfulness, and demonstrate itself to be the animating force, the new principle of truth. Only when faith does this does it build its inner, harmonious, and novel world. The Theanthropic initiation is over-estimated, if the principle, faith, is already taken for the end and goal. A non-efficient principle is dead, and is not properly a principle. For that is not a principle which is not a principle for something else than itself. Faith only strengthens and grows as it gradually assimilates and homogeneously shapes the whole world of the spiritual life in knowledge and volition. The more successful the assimilation, the more sure is the preservation of a joyous sentiment of life and a joyous sense of power. The world of human volition does not occupy us further here; it belongs to the science of Ethics and to ethical praxis, the principle of which is also found in faith: we have only to do with the world of the knowledge of divine things. This labour is not discharged by the immediate certainty of the fundamental fact of redemption, but has become the more important and difficult, because the thoughts already pertaining to the world of the first creation have their own laws of existence, and have already grown to an independent form previously to the act of faith,—indeed, seeing that the world of the first creation already possesses an appropriate knowledge. The problem therefore is, by virtue of the union in faith, at once perfect and fundamental, of the first and second creation, by which man has attained in his very nature a true unity, a unity of a natural and a divine life, of a natural life of reason and of a higher divine enlightenment, for the Christian view of the world to be now carried out, and the work of this union to be effected in the concrete spiritual world, which, because of its connection with sin, is still so chaotically rent and darkened by so many contradictions. Because of the independence which the first creation with the whole rich world of its thinking life maintains, not merely without the believer or in man previously to faith, but even after he has become a believer, it is no light task to learn the coherence of the second creation with the whole nature of man, and with the whole world indeed, although that coherence is already certain to faith by virtue of an anticipation it possesses. And this task will only be completed when the

first creation has ceased in the estimation of faith to be a world opposed to, independent of, foreign or even inimical to, the Christian principle, which may exist and grow as it likes apart from Christianity, Christian knowledge having succeeded in vindicating it to the Christian principle. A hint is thus given how the verification of Christianity, or more exactly the knowledge of that verification, must be completed. The verification cannot aim at seeking a higher principle than the Christian for its derivation. Were it to do so, Christianity could not be the perfect or absolute religion. The knowledge of the verification of Christianity must rather be knowledge of its self-verification, *i.e.* since it is a unity of the eternal, the divine, and the historic,—knowledge that the latter aspect has its verification in its eternal aspect, which in turn also seeks realization in time. This eternal aspect, or the divine Logos, must be recognised as the living bond of union between the first and second creation, as the uniting principle which adjusted the first creation to the second, but which also, after its cosmic and historical preparation had been made, appeared in its anxiously looked for and perfect self-revelation.

3. The psychological evidence of the necessity for advance from faith, and the immediacy of its certainty, to the function of apprehension, which is also directed towards certainty, or to Gnosis, is as follows. In faith the whole personality is active and receptive, not feeling merely, but also (as the genesis of faith showed) the will and the faculty of knowledge, and thus its immediate certainty is related to the whole person. The Christian has the feeling of divine peace or of his redemption; he has and is conscious of a new and moral life-impulse and a beginning of objective knowledge of Christ, by whose power he is touched, and is spiritually apprehended. But these three fundamental functions of the spirit are not able merely to work as factors *in the form which they have in the act of faith*, in the hour of devotion and of the consummation of fellowship with God. But as hours must also follow when the will emerges from that immediate unity in order to form by acts a moral world, knowledge can also and must assume the form of special acts of apprehension, by which likewise an interdependent whole is attested. And it is true this does not happen in this way only, that the

understanding directs itself by reflection to pious conditions of feeling, in order, as it is able to receive the most diverse conditions, to treat them in the most diverse ways, and to seize and classify their contents by the aid of precise expression ; for in that way we might possibly have only the subject himself for the object of knowledge, without an objective knowledge of God and the divine acts ; the understanding would only remain outside the fact ; at most, it would seek to arrive by inference at an objectivity as the sufficient basis for the conditions of Christian feeling, whilst this objective and living basis would only be outside the understanding, and not in living contact with it. On the contrary, the rational nature of the believer may itself participate in a divine enlightenment, and rejoice in the presence of living truth or of God in Christ, just as the will may rejoice in an additional divine impulse, by which it applies itself to its vocation with power and freedom. And just as the will moves according to its innate laws, the intellect moves according to its laws, according to the laws of thought in the formation of ideas, judgment, inference. Yet more manifest does the distinction become between Gnosis and that which is immediate and religious merely, and yet more manifest does the relative independence of the former become, from the following reflection. It is as certain that our knowledge is not *merely empirical*, as it is certain that our knowledge is *gained by experience* (§ 4). Rather is it the function of external experience to arouse a knowledge self-dependent, more secure, and attesting itself to us by immediate evidence. We learn, for example, mathematical truths originally, of course, by the medium of experience ; but we have only grasped them really when they have become to us truths which are self-evident and necessary, and also independent of the experiences made by ourselves. We know that the propositions of mathematics would be true in themselves even if we had not had those experiences which awoke them within us, indeed, if we did not exist, and are thus true independently of our subjectivity. In like manner our conscience testifies that the moral laws which have come into our consciousness by education, and therefore from without, are valid in themselves, and are unconditionally true and necessary,—stedfast did we not exist, or did we contradict them in our practice. Similarly



also is it with the Christian experience of faith. It must not be supposed that the Christian truths are only to be regarded as true because and so far as *we* have, and have had, the Christian experience of our personal salvation in Christ; even independently of our own subjectivity, Christian truth must be recognisable as essentially true. This is possible because Christian truth bestows its own enlightenment upon the believer who is passing over into the exercise of knowledge, and because the believer may pass over into the condition of contemplation and of spiritual intuition, in which he does not think of himself, and is still less active, but resigns himself to what is revealed to him by faith, and trusts himself to its guidance.<sup>1</sup> Contemplation cannot disengage itself from the historic, but it does not adhere to the historic as to something past and gone, but recognises therein the revelation of an eternal thought and will, of a divinely originated necessity. If the essence of what is Christian, although historical, is also a non-accidental or non-arbitrary reality, but a reality arising in and answering to the divine nature, it must always be possible for living divine apprehension to take an ever-deepening glance into the connections and the wisdom or necessity of the divine saving acts. This is possible if the soul, that microcosm, is designed for likeness to God on the side of intelligence, and there is truth in Tertullian's saying about the *anima naturaliter christiana*. There are not only eternal truths which are self-evident to the human spirit of a mathematical, logical, and ethical kind, but Christianity also belongs, albeit in its own way, to the realm of counsels based in the eternal nature of God, but intended for historical realization in time, and so far belongs to the realm of eternal truths—indeed, is the middle point of those truths through which they first have their absolute establishment and coherence. To the endowment of human intelligence for the apprehension of divine things there also belongs, side by side with the ability of forming ideas and judgments, the power of intuition (just as the apostle attributed eyes to the heart of the Christian), the plastic force, which reflects in a

<sup>1</sup> Related to the above exposition is that of Beck's *Einleitung in das System der christl. Lehre oder propädeutische Entwicklung der christl. Lehrwissenschaft*, 1838, § 7, pp. 39, etc., 2d edit. pp. 36, etc. Köstlin, pp. 80, 101, etc.

living manner, or copies, real thoughts of God and truths. Our phantasy certainly inclines in many ways to arbitrariness or sport. But even phantasy of itself belongs to the divine likeness, and, so far as it works normally, is capable of being a copy of the creative divine phantasy, and of receiving its materials without falsification, if imperfectly yet veraciously, as regards those particulars where religion is concerned. The state of faith serves, in the first place, as a fence or correction against possible aberrations, phantasy being unable to contradict that state; secondly, the formation of exact ideas from the material presented by phantasy is also of service.

4. The Holy Scriptures, and especially the writings of Paul and John, render prominent in numerous passages the importance of *knowledge* being united with faith. In a certain sense knowledge is attributed to every Christian as such, and increase in knowledge is desired.<sup>1</sup> Christians are characterized as those who have known the truth.<sup>2</sup> There is nevertheless a mention of *Gnosis* as a special *charisma*.<sup>3</sup> It is distinguished from *σοφία*, practical wisdom, and from *διδασχί*, the gift of those who are apt to teach, as well as from *προφητεία*, the inspired utterance, drawn from the depths of the facts of salvation. It is the gift of the glance into truth as such, and into its connections. It is indeed very different from perfect knowledge, the seeing face to face; it remains a partial knowledge, therefore it must be exhorted to humility; still it is vision, and not merely faith; it apprehends truth itself, although in a picture or in a mirror. In the portrait truth is itself present, albeit not in full revelation, for the portrait has still something symbolic about it.<sup>4</sup> *Gnosis*, in the sense of *charisma*, is the presupposition in Theology, especially in Systematic Theology, which arises when there is united with the glance or higher intuition of *gnosis* the gift of doctrinal exposition. Little as Theology is necessary for every believer, still all *charismata* are appointed for

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 4-6, xiv. 6; 2 Cor. ii. 14, iv. 6, vi. 6, viii. 7, x. 5; Phil. i. 10, iii. 15; Col. i. 9, ii. 2; John viii. 32, iv. 42, xiv. 6, 21; 1 John ii. 3, 13, iv. 6, 16, v. 20.

<sup>2</sup> 2 John 1.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 8, xiv. 6.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12: δι' ὁρώμενον, ἢ ἀινύμεται; comp. Rom. i. 20: νοούμενον καὶ ὁρώμενον.

the common welfare, even gnosis and its realization in scientific form, and Theology is also counted upon in the erection of the Church. Gnosis and true Theology do not quit the atmosphere of faith, but live and move therein, and the inseparable connection of all healthy Theology with faith, *i.e.* real and living communion with God, is the basis of its independence as contrasted with all other sciences; for it is agreed that the true comprehension of the Christian truth as to salvation is not accessible as truth to common, that is, to natural reason of itself, and apart from faith. Still, on the other hand, Gnosis is of value for its own sake, and Theology is a peculiar formation of the Christian spirit. The relation between faith on the one side and Christian science on the other is an interchange of service and counter-service. The *cognitive* function especially renders essential service to the life of faith whence it springs. It shows the fruitfulness of faith, develops its embryonic knowledge, and thus unfolds its riches to the spirit more and more. Further, it secures steadfastness in the life of faith. For though the believer is immediately certain of his salvation and of Christian truth, still, for all that, the world-consciousness, and especially the world of objective thought, is not yet brought into harmony therewith; but for those who are endowed with more alert intelligence, the cognitive faculty may become the seat of unvanquished doubts and disturbances, which destroy peace and inward assurance; and thus also a piety without knowledge and enlightenment so readily assumes in the face of foes an irritable and even passionate character in the unconscious sentiment of personal weakness, or withdraws, as if in flight, into the citadel of faith; whilst repose, and safety, and loving sympathy with those who are still without the blessing of salvation, return with the consciousness that the Christian Church is not wanting in forces able to grapple with opponents in the field of thought, to make head against what is actually antichristian, and to expose its internal contradictions. But if science would supply what faith needs, and if the two forces, which are to be brought into conscious harmony, and which may be briefly described in the world of thought as the world of the first and of the second creation, are to be apprehended in their intimate connection, they must be present and find expression at the same time in

the spirit. The scientific process will thus resemble a dialogue, in which the initiative is taken by rejoicing faith that struggles after knowledge, whilst it is already exalted to the possession of an inward assurance of the truth of Christianity, or of the fact that Christianity is in itself absolute truth, and is in a position to introduce even into opposite or inimical realms that light which scatters the dividing errors. The aim of the dialogue is the blending of both worlds, which correspond like desire and fulfilment. The more successful the intercourse, the wider becomes the spiritual possession of the believer; and the assurance peculiar to faith is now transmuted by the scientific process into concrete knowledge, so that the consciousness of God, as well as the concrete consciousness of self and of the world, is increasingly admitted into Christian certainty. Seeing that *the initiative is taken* by faith, and the whole process is set in motion by faith, in its own interests, a guarantee is thus afforded that nothing heterogeneous, nothing of the nature of a mutilated Christianity, but only the Christian contents, remains as the object of scientific treatment. Faith, in alliance with objective Christianity, is a fence beneath which nothing alien can force its way. It is not that what faith says, even before its dictate is acknowledged by thought as verified, should be accepted as a scientific statement because faith states it; but that the reconciliation of these two forces is only to be thought as concluded when each has discovered the validity of the other, and both, belief and reason which directs its attention to science, have acknowledged their interdependence. The richer we think the life of faith on the one side, the stronger and the more ripe we think the religious certainty of the internal truth of the contents of faith presented by the *κρήρυγμα*, the richer we think the scientific power and the more scrupulously the dialogue between them is carried on on both sides, the more solid will be the result. A security for the possible success of the labour to know the first and the second creation in their mutual connection, we may see in the fact that there is a junction between the two which points from the first creation to the second. That is the ethical element, the science, of which cannot be dispensed with, and which, on the other hand, points the way to Christianity, as supposition

points to fact, and longing and thirst point to fulfilment (Gal. iii. 24).

### § 13.—*The Dogmatic Method.*

Christian Doctrine has not simply to proceed upon a productive method, but rather upon a reproductive, and that, too, in no mere empirical and reflective manner, but in one that erects (constructively) and progresses. The enlightened Christian spirit, united by faith and its experience to objective Christianity, by the agency of which faith is conscious of having been originated, and which is attested by Holy Writ and the scriptural faith of the Church, has to bring its religious knowledge to systematic verification and development.

1. Christian faith, the genesis of which we have considered, is not a mere subjective act or disposition of the person, but has objective contents, with which it is combined and through which it is conscious of having become what it is, namely Christianity, although in an embryonic form, and through which it is qualified for becoming the immediate starting-point for Dogmatics.<sup>1</sup> It is proper, however, for the scientific treatment of faith to survey the realm of its declarations to see which of them objectively and really verifies, and which is verified. The scientific function has to

<sup>1</sup> That has been proved in classical fashion in Chr. Fr. Schmid's *Programm* of the year 1831: *Quatenus ex ecclesia evangelica principia existere possit doctrinae christianae scientia?* Similarly Beck, § 5. At the same time, the so-called Material Principle of the Evangelical Church is also dogmatically reinstated. I say "so-called," since against the designation cogent considerations may be advanced, as I have remarked in my work, *Das Princip unserer Kirche nach dem inneren Verhältniss seiner beiden Seiten*, 1841. In the same work there is proposed as a substitute for the misleading expressions "Formal" and "Material" Principles, the designation "objective and subjective principles," with the further definition that by *subjective* is not to be understood human subjectivity in general, but subjectivity in union with objective Christianity as it is seen in Scripture, which may be called *subjective-objective*, just as conversely by the *objective* principle is not to be understood the Holy Scriptures or the Teaching of the Church as a mere foreign and external authority, but in the dependent objective whole, the tendency of



bring out clearly the knowledge contained in faith, and, of course, the immediate certainty immanent in faith belongs to these contents. But such a process would of itself be a mere description of faith and its contents, and we should have no exposition of the objective verification of these contents. Shall we say, then, that faith is this verification, since its certainty is guarantee for these contents? Quite apart from the fact that the compass of the immediate certainty of faith might be improperly extended, we are compelled to say that (since Christian Doctrine is not merely concerned with the description of pious states of feeling [§ 2, p. 38, etc.], but is also concerned with objective truth, and the presentation of real facts in the order in which one thing verified verifies another) faith cannot be called the verifier of Christianity; the verifying power as regards faith lies in objective Christianity, as it is revealed by Christ, and is attested by Scripture, and in the last resort in God. Certain as it is that faith is itself a reality, faith is nevertheless not the principle of the existence of Christianity (*principium essendi*); just as little are the Holy Scriptures and the Church, those objective products of Christianity; faith is only the subjective *principium cognoscendi* of Christianity, whilst God in Christ and in the Holy Spirit remains the *principium essendi*. Although, therefore, all Christian truth only becomes certain to us by the agency, on the one hand, of the authentic testimony of Christ, and on the other by means of faith which receives that testimony (*principium medians objectivum et subjectivum*), whilst the

which is to attain internal existence in the Christian personality, united therewith by grateful love. I rejoice that the designation "objective and subjective principle" has been accepted and lucidly expounded by Frank, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, 1878, § 7, and in somewhat modified form in opposition both to the advocates of a trinity of principles (the third being the Church), and to the advocates of a unity without duality, as well as in opposition to those who would either know nothing at all of the principle of personal certainty, or would substitute the Church and the Bible for that certainty. Only I hold it to be more correct, and more in correspondence with the Evangelical type of doctrine, contrary to the view of Frank, to oppose to the subjective principle, which Frank calls *principium cognoscendi*, the *principium essendi* (God), rather than to place the Scriptures as the *principium cognoscendi objectivum* by the side of the subject, which in the sense just explained is the *principium cognoscendi subjectivum* of Christian truth, and to represent both as held together by the ultimate unity, the *principium essendi* (God).

Holy Spirit brings both into unity; still the dogmatic exposition, claiming, as it does, an objective character, conformably with the actual matters of fact therein contained, will have to place the supreme basis of Christianity at the head, the more certainly that this basis must be the verifier both of the complete objective and the subjective stability of Christianity, the *principium essendi* for the existence of Christianity and for its certainty. The immediate material for Exegetic Theology is the Bible, for Historic Theology the History of the Church, but for Dogmatic and Thetic Theology faith and its contents appropriated from the Scriptures, which faith has by Scripture to continually approve itself as Christian. The ultimate fact in these contents is the Christian idea of God. *A Jove principium.* From that idea as the ultimate unity and truth, all the declarations of faith, and all Christian truths, are to be immediately or mediately derived. Thus the postulate from which Christian Doctrine, of course, starts, that Christianity is a homogeneous system, an organism of truth, will best be tested. But as far as this ultimate unity is itself concerned,—the Christian idea of God, which, once apprehended by religious certainty in faith, becomes the material of the gnosis which learns the internal necessity of its material,—it will be exhibited as essentially true and necessary, since, on the one hand, the indissoluble association of *the Idea of God in general* with the reasoning nature of man, and, on the other hand, the perfection and completion of the Idea of God in the Christian Idea of God, are established. That attained, there is already completed in the most important respect the scientific blending of the first and second creations, and this blending will affect prototypically the further unions of the same contrast. Accordingly, we shall, of course, commence with the universal consciousness of God, and then proceed according to the methods of universal rational thought; but rational thought, restored to a normal state (also the work and labour of Christianity), not merely does not contradict primary Christian knowledge, but finds therein the complement it longed for; so that Christianity appears as the close of the revelation of the divine Logos, which began in the common reason of man.

2. Since Dogmatics aims at the formation of a complete

scientific conviction of Christianity, a mere defensive or offensive method, which would provide a desultory, abrupt, or casual treatment, will not suffice; the process must be systematic and continuous. Faith knows it has attained in Christ the highest religious result in its fundamental religious knowledge, the union of all other religious truth. It desires to become knowledge of itself, of its contents and their internal truth. The believer has so to construct the System that during the scientific process faith neither surrenders itself nor remains idle. But faith desires to become knowledge by means of scientific method, by logical sharpness of idea, by the unbrokenness of continuity, by the stringency or necessity of advance from one moment to another. And as, in reference to the contents, faith takes the place of conscience, which warns against straying to the idealistic or empiristic side, and in case of any contradiction to the contents of faith urges a revision of the scientific process; so Logic is in a formal respect the conscience of science, and any contradiction to its laws shows that what has been advanced as the contents of the certainty of the believing spirit, or at least its expression, needs correction, by which course alone can piety be a gainer.

3. We now take a comparative glance at the *various ways and methods in which the construction of a dogmatic system has been undertaken*. The development of the contents of faith from "pure thought," as well as the mere historic and empirical method (which recurs to the teaching of the Church or of Holy Scripture), has been excluded by what has been previously said (§§ 6-9). Both methods contravene the ideal-real character of the Christian object. It is pleasing to be able to state that for all the more important and recent theologians since Schleiermacher, *faith*, if under different names, is the fundamental principle of Dogmatics, although, of course, in very diverse ways. Some allow themselves to be satisfied with the certainty of faith without essaying an objective knowledge scientifically verified; they think it sufficient to establish the harmony of the declarations of faith with the Scriptures or the Church, or both. They leave the immediate religious certainty of faith, if they concern themselves with objective truth at all, to answer for the certainty of that

truth; they at most undertake the establishment of the Christian or ecclesiastical nature of their positions. A few, indeed, incline to substitute the common faith for individual faith, that is, the teaching of the Church, whilst they cover themselves with the assurance that what is as yet inexperienced by individuals is notwithstanding the experience of the Church, and has the attestation of truth because it is ecclesiastical; a kind of substitution of the Church for theological labour, by which the duty of the theologian is inappropriately relaxed, but by which the Church, which is still divided in its Confessions, is arbitrarily constituted faultless in its dogma-building.<sup>1</sup> It would be a parallel illicit relaxation of the dogmatic proof if the assertion sufficed that the *Testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* attested the divine origin of the whole Bible; a satisfactory dogmatic proof of every position would then be found in the fact that it is contained in the Bible. The latter opinion would lead us back to the view that the prerequisite for the establishment of the certainty of faith is faith in Inspiration; whilst the former view would make it impossible to maintain the difference between it and the ecclesiastical and authoritative standpoint of Catholicism. Others, again, seek to attain in Dogmatics to objective positions, to objective knowledge, for example of God, of the Trinity, of Christ, and that scientifically if diversely. What, then, is the correct method for the construction of the dogmatic system *from faith* and its certainty? Three methods chiefly are eligible from the standpoint of Evangelical faith. All three have proved themselves fruitful, but do not answer equally well the purpose aimed at.

Schleiermacher not merely makes the fact of the Christian consciousness the fundamental postulate, but constitutes the pious and Christian state of the subject the sole contents of Christian Doctrine. Those contents are in his esteem material for reflection in order to their description. He collects the declarations of faith; the scientific function has merely to bring these declarations to their sharpest expression, to show their relation to each other, and to shape them into a homogeneous whole by the architectonic art of arrangement. But this method in no way concerns itself with the scientific

<sup>1</sup> With this Frank quite agrees; see pp. 86, etc.

apprehension of the objective self-verification of Christianity; it does not concern itself, indeed, with an objective knowledge of God and Christ, since, according to Schleiermacher, Christianity consists in the feeling or consciousness of redemption. But this cannot be agreed to (see §§ 2, 4, etc.). He severs the knowledge and certainty of objective truth from Christian piety; and with that course the unity of the personality, as at once pious and intelligent, does not harmonize. As we said, piety desires objectivity, and does not wish to have to do with itself alone; and piety attains its desire by an initial union at least of the consciousness of God—the living God who has become manifest in history, in the immediateness of faith—with the consciousness of self and of the world. It is not a matter of indifference to Christian piety how it is related to the objectivity of what is believed. Faith knows in Christianity God Himself, the revelation of His heart, knowing as it does in Christianity the absolute religion into which, as even Schleiermacher says, all other modes of faith are destined to pass over. But if faith knows in Christianity the absolute divine revelation of love, faith also possesses a knowledge of the objective and internal nature of God.

It is better in this relation to say, with J. Müller, that we must of course strive to advance from the religious certainty of faith to an *objective knowledge of God*; but that is only to be done *retrogressively*, by inferring the cause from the effect. The spirit reflects upon its Christian experience, its immediate knowledge of redemption, and from this sure fact draws its inferences as to the cause and its nature. Thus it arrives at objective statements regarding God, which may in turn be arranged in a logical whole. Thus von Hofmann, Thomasius, Nietzsche, Lange, and Frank, as well as J. Müller, proceed. But is it correct to arrive at God and His causality, to know God or Christ, in the first place from inference from our being saved and enlightened, or from our new birth? Is a consciousness of salvation possible apart from a consciousness of God, and a very precise consciousness? Rather, in the religious process, God and His activity, even a consciousness of God, are already presupposed; and by means of the religious process itself the eye of the mind is already opened for God

(§ 11, 4, 5), and God is revealed to the mental eye (Eph. i 18); but we do not first become certain of God and His nature *via causalitatis*,—by an inference from that mental vision or our mental state, to their originator. Faith already possesses immediately the spiritual intuition of God as a Father; it has a knowledge not simply of itself, of its redemption, but also, primarily, of the redeeming God. We cannot know ourselves happy in the divine peace apart from an objective representation of God—apart from an objective consciousness of God; and man is only redeemed by a conscious surrender of the spirit to this object of knowledge. Our personal salvation could not be certain for a moment, unless we experienced as well as inferred its objective verification in God,—unless we recognised in one and the same Christ, Him who was armed with the power of redemption, and ourselves as His redeemed, the objects of His love. Faith is of course the point of union in which self-evident truth, and God and Christ, make themselves known. But faith is not the foundation, the verification of this truth. But being verified by that truth, it apprehends how it has objective security in itself, its self-verification, or its self-evident force.

This leads to the *third* method, especially represented by Liebner, Rothe, and Martensen. Faith is not as sure of its power or perfection as it is of the power of God and of Christ, in whom it knows itself to be strong and to be hidden, in whom it knows redemption and the consciousness of redemption to have its ultimate foundation. It is not the personal and subjective redeemed nature, the new life of the regenerate, which is the final verification to the believer of the certainty of God, but *faith has a knowledge of God* in Himself; faith has a knowledge of being known of God, and of its existence because of God, and that in such a way that it knows God as the one absolutely certain and sure fact, as the one self-verifying and self-subsisting fact, as the source of the new personality and its divine knowledge, as the one fact which, like light, is its own best evidence, and which imparts to all other knowledge of the Ego its own sure certainty. Thus faith is not the evidence, but the medium by which God perfects *His own* self-evidence. Faith accepts that evidence, and now the personal witness of our spirit may follow (Eph. i 18). But

when it is thus acknowledged that there is not merely given in faith a *sense or knowledge of ITSELF*, and thus a self-consciousness, but also a *GOD-consciousness*, a knowledge of God, which is in fact the final verification of the Christian self-consciousness, there is no longer any reason why the scientific activity should not *progressively* advance from that knowledge of the believing spirit, from that knowledge of God, or why it should direct its attention simply to the subjective fact of being redeemed, in order to obtain retrogressively, by inference, causal propositions respecting God.

4. *The Relation to Scripture and the Church.*—The insufficiency of the *fides historica*, whether its object be the Scriptures or the Church, we have been obliged to acknowledge, and consequently to renounce the proof of the truth of its positions from any formal authority it possesses. That proof is rather to be deduced from the contents of the case itself, from its coherence with what is objectively certain in faith.

*The doctrine of the Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scriptures* can especially only receive its verification from the truth of Christianity, which must, as surely as it is truth, maintain itself. That doctrine can only therefore have its appropriate place *within* the System, and cannot be the verification of the truth of the positions of the System. But the object of Dogmatics, on the other hand, has reference to an objective and historic reality; and Christian faith needs the undoubted postulate that the contents, which are its life, correspond to historic Christianity. Thus also Christian Doctrine needs the authentication of the Christianity of its positions. And its Christianity it cannot more surely authenticate otherwise than by its harmony with Scripture, the record of primitive Christianity. It is insufficient for faith, formed by the Scriptures, to be penetrated and supported by the Scriptures; its scriptural character must expressly appear. The positions of faith must legitimate themselves as Christian by scriptural proof. Finally, its positions must also claim an *ecclesiastical* character. Since Dogmatics aims not merely at being a scientific exposition of the faith of an individual, but the truth itself upon which a Christian community was and is founded, Dogmatics would give a scientific presentation of the faith of the community,—that is, it must also have an

*ecclesiastical character*, although naturally enough the regard a position enjoys in the Church would not be a sufficient proof of its truth, and although a position might have an allotted space in the System, which might not be expressly in accordance with the Confessions. For if a position is demonstrably scriptural, according to the Evangelical doctrine of the Church it has an *essentially* ecclesiastical character; it has citizenship and a claim to regard, even though it do not enjoy a formal validity; and a position which is demonstrably opposed to Scripture has similarly no claim to acceptance, though it be ecclesiastical. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to prove a simple unity with Scripture, and, by means of that unity, to prove a unity with the true Church. A dogmatic theologian has a radical desire not merely to justify and verify the isolated faith of a single person, but the faith of the community, since he does not wish to frame a Confession, but to labour upon one. He knows the common faith also to be his peculiar possession, and his own faith he knows to be the possession of the ecclesiastical community; and that fact must also stand out in the method by virtue of a reference back to the Confessions or to recognised teachers of the Church. Finally, as far as diversity of the *Confessions* is concerned, Dogmatics adheres, it is true, in many positions, especially in those of the Fundamental Part, to the common belief of Christians. And yet even in this common belief the Confessional element is prominent. First, because, as is evident from what precedes, it is not every Confession which presents, with equal acumen and stringency with the Evangelical, the problem relative to religious and scientific certainty. Next, in reference to the contents, the doctrines which fall to the share of the Fundamental Part will be of importance for the special and particular Confession, because in them the ultimate scientific decision upon differences in creed must of necessity be contained. The whole structure, for example, will assume a very different turn, according as a view of the Church rules where everything is to be expressly built up upon the tradition of the Church, or according as a higher guarantee of Christianity than the historic does not dawn upon the sight, or yet again, according as the positions are deduced from the contents of Christian faith, and especially according as the idea of God is so framed that



it is responsible for the *fides divina*, and the origination of that *fides* is the aim in view.

§ 14.—*Division of the Complete System.*

The whole System of doctrine is divided into two main parts, one of which contains the Fundamental Doctrine, and the other the Specific Christian Doctrine.

1. If Christ is the centre of Christian faith and its objective principle, together with the scientific verification of this central point in the unity of its two sides, the divine or eternal and the human or historic, Christianity itself has its initial scientific verification. This importance of Christ appears in its clear light if we state the problem and aim of Fundamental Theology to be, the scientific apprehension of the fact that Jesus Christ is the God-man. With the demonstration of the necessity of Jesus the main task is completed to which the science of Apologetics has to bend its attention. This first and fundamental Part of the dogmatic System might therefore be designated Apologetics, and would in that case be followed by the construction of the special Christian Doctrine, which would form the second Part, and which would have to develop the exposition of the objective Christian principle thus gained by Apologetics.

2. First of all then, as far as the *first* Part is concerned, and the problem of scientifically apprehending the necessity for the appearance of Christ, no small difficulty is introduced by the circumstance that we cannot treat in Fundamental Theology the Doctrine of Evil with any minuteness, although that doctrine seems to offer the easiest and most natural verification for the necessity of the appearance of the God-man. It is not a casual thing that previous Apologetics have not regarded the Doctrine of Sin as part of its province, but that the doctrines which are treated are part of Religion and Revelation in general, and doctrines which have a meaning and an importance apart from sin; especially such doctrines as Miracle, Prophecy, Inspiration, supposed to serve as verifications of faith in the incarnation or in the divine mission of

Jesus. By means of these doctrines, it was desired to substantiate beforehand an idea of God, relatively to which a fact, such as the incarnation or the divine mission of Christ, might not appear too foreign, and thus might not appear as something which, considered in itself, lies so far from the nature of God, and seems so alien to that nature, that sin was the first to have effected and to have manifested such an alteration of the divine character and purpose, by which the incarnation became possible and real. In our esteem, the transfer of the Doctrine of Sin from the first and apologetical Part to the second Part, is recommended by the circumstance that we are not in a position to formulate the necessity of sin, and to make sin the basis of the necessity of the manifestation of Christ, which would thus never receive scientific verification, resting as it would upon something casual, something born of human caprice. If, on the other hand, quite apart from sin, and because of the nature both of God and man, the possibility of the union of those two natures in the incarnation has been recognised, we have convinced ourselves that this two-fold nature offers no opposition to the incarnation, but calls for it and tends towards it; in that case, the form of the incarnation, which has become necessary because of sin, and of which the second Part treats, will have found its meet foundation; whilst, on the other hand, the necessity of the incarnation, because of the entrance of sin, will have become manifest from a new side. The hope that it will be possible to verify this necessity in general in the Fundamental Part is based upon the consciousness of the believer that Christianity is the absolute or eternal religion, and that the Person of Christ is inseparably associated therewith.

3. The arrangement of material resulting from what has been said varies, in an important degree, from that of preceding Apologetics; but it is hoped that a good justification for the change will be afforded. There are numerous apologies which have done good service by the defence of single points, especially of history, and by contesting antagonistic ideas according to the necessities of the time.<sup>1</sup> But even if

<sup>1</sup> As, for example, the labours of Stirn, whose *Apologie*, the second edition of which appeared in 1856, remains the best of its kind; further examples are seen in Ehrenfeuchter, Christlieb, Ebrard, Luthardt, Delitzsch, etc.

those apologies avoid what is adventitious, and that abruptness which is associated with the mere offensive or defensive attitude, and with dependence upon changing opponents, they do not aim at showing the internal necessity of Christianity, though they know how to commend Christianity strongly by reference to its blessed effects, and its relation to all that is noble. But faith does not simply desire a secure position against temporary assaults by defence or by controverting the opponents who may arise ; were that desire all, it could have no scientific security, inasmuch as additional opponents might succeed those who have been vanquished. Faith desires to know itself in its objective truth and verification, and therefore assaults are to faith simply the constraining starting-point. The peculiar problem must assume the form of a connected and thetic procedure. Only when the internal truth and necessity of a thing is made good, are inimical standpoints overcome, and insecurity and fear of new assaults obviated ; and with this position it readily consists that the defensive and offensive attitudes are incorporated as elements in that special thetic process which has to move systematically. The attempts of Supernaturalism, which have been mentioned and criticized previously, proceed with more system, but their weakness culminates in the fact that they presuppose a doctrine of God, and that a very precise one, for their most important means of proof (Miracle, Prophecy, etc.), whilst they seek to verify the Christian doctrines, and amongst them the Doctrine of God, by means of their apologetic proof. And the same thing—that they do not include the Doctrine of God, but regard the apologetic defence of Christianity as possible without that doctrine—is to be said of the present prevailing custom of prefacing Dogmatics by the ideas of Religion, Revelation, and the Holy Scriptures, fancying that somehow a verification is afforded of the doctrines of Faith, or that a Fundamental Theology is established, whether by recurring to the method of Supernaturalism, or, having begun with Religion, and shown this to be part of universal human nature, by deriving from that fact the idea of Revelation ; in which case the astonishing thing is how, from a psychological phenomenon, the universality of which must be first proved by a complete induction, in order to be regarded as necessarily

belonging to the nature of man on the strength of its frequent occurrence,—how it is thought to be possible, from such a psychological phenomenon, to deduce a revelation which is itself that psychical phenomenon under another name. Generally speaking, there can be no scientific reference apparently to Religion and Revelation before we know that God is and what He is, what man is and what is his state. Since, then, the Doctrine of God undoubtedly belongs to Dogmatics, and a System of Doctrine cannot be imagined without it, it also immediately follows that true Apologetics belong to Dogmatics (or so far, at least, as it aims at verifying the Christian objective principle, as we maintain), and must form the first and Fundamental Part of the complete System of Doctrine; it also follows that, in order to arrive at this apologetical aim, we cannot dispense with the Doctrine of God and the Doctrine of Man in this Fundamental Part. That scientific Apologetics cannot be completed in a purely formal way, and especially without a Doctrine of God, many also acknowledge;<sup>1</sup> they would therefore borrow a Doctrine of God from Dogmatics in behalf of their Apologetics, which is, nevertheless, divided from their complete System. But that is to verify Apologetics or the Fundamental Doctrine by the aid of Dogmatics, which is to argue in a circle; although in that course a correct apprehension is displayed that it is not every representation of God that possibly exists which can serve to verify the Christian revelation, but only that representation which the complete System of Christian faith has to form and defend. In the last resort, therefore, it is in the true idea of God that the verification of the world and of man, and especially of revelation and the fundamental Christian facts, as to their possibility and necessity, is to be sought. The idea of God, which can do this service, will, indeed, originate in the highest revelation. Would that idea already be the common good of universal reason, to which there was still lacking the fact of revelation? And this is not arguing in a circle, inasmuch as the Christian revelation accredits itself to the spirit in the free and personal knowledge of faith as *essentially* true (§§ 11, 12). Add to this, that the

<sup>1</sup> For example, Sack's *Apologetik*. The same thing is seen in Voigt, *Fundamental Dogmatik*, 1874, as well as in Reiff and Delitzsch, *Apolog.* pp. 258, etc.

immediate knowledge of God given *in faith*, that knowledge which constitutes the fundamental knowledge of faith, is not to be employed by us immediately, and without a scientific process, as that knowledge, relatively to which everything else is to be judged, and from which everything else is to be deduced; but in this matter that dialogue (§ 12, 4; § 13, 1) comes in, in which the Christian spirit becomes certain of the homogeneity of the Christian idea of God with the dictates of reason, and, indeed, becomes assured of the fact that only therein is to be found the satisfactory conclusion and the desirable substantiation of all that is founded upon the reasoning nature of man. If this point is reached, it is clear that the *sana ratio*, the reasoning nature of the Christian, is not essentially opposed to the Christian idea of God, but finds in that idea its true atmosphere and the satisfaction of its wants. And if that idea is reached, the more confident will be the advance from the Christian idea of God (which does not merely harmonize with reason, but introduces the reason to truth) to the Doctrine of the World and of *Man*, and to the Doctrine of the union or communion between God and man, or to *Religion*, inasmuch as the Christian, enlightened by faith, apprehends the Christian idea of God with the same, nay, with greater certainty than the natural reason apprehends the idea of God generally.

*Observation.*—Like the idea of religion, the ideas of revelation, inspiration, and miracles also stand in need of a verification, which they cannot adequately obtain by a mere psychological or historical method *before* the drawing up of the System. The place where they must seek and find their firm recognition is the Dogmatic System itself, not its forecourt, is, in fact, the first Part of the System. Upon the establishment of every single point of the evangelical history previous Scientific Apologetics did not enter, and rightly, but Exegetical Theology was allowed to answer for these points, and to such the life of Jesus belongs. It is also necessary to add that pure historical and historico-critical inquiries are one thing, systematic or thetic investigations are another.

4. But if we place the above-mentioned Doctrines of God, and of Man, and of Religion in the forefront of the verification of Christianity, do we not in that way produce a new incon-

venience, inasmuch as in the complete System of Christian Faith, the first Part of which is the verification of the Christian principle (Fundamental Doctrine or Apologetics), all the positions must have a Christian character, as Schleiermacher rightly required? It is true this demand was not satisfied by Schleiermacher himself, inasmuch as he only treated in his first part the attributes of the divine Eternity, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience, which do not essentially possess a precise Christian character, for he does not place them in any internal relation to the other attributes of Righteousness and Holiness on the one hand, or of Wisdom and Love on the other—indeed, he allows the second and third groups of the attributes to be dominated on the whole by the first, and especially by the divine Omnipotence. But if we adhere, as we must, to the demand for the Christian character of all the positions of the dogmatic ruling idea, how does that attitude square with the verification of the Christian in history by means of the idea of God and the included doctrine of the creation and of man, etc.? If that which is to verify Christianity seems to precede what is Christian, how can that which is to verify be itself called Christian? The reply is, that it may allowably bear the name of Christian if it is demonstrated, *in the first place*, that all true knowledge of God, even that which constitutes the basis and verification of the historically Christian, originates in the same principle which has received its full revelation in Christ, namely, in the Logos, the absolute revelation of whom Christianity announces in the incarnate Word; so that Christianity attributes all religious truth *to itself*, although one thing in the realm of that truth is the verifier of another. It may also bear the name of Christian, if, *on the other hand*, the Christian definition of the idea of God (that is to say, *that* in it which first comes into a clear and certain light by means of Christianity) approves itself as the confirmation and completion of all that is natural and accessible to the *sana ratio* in the idea of God, and thus imparts to that natural idea a Christian character. In that case the treatment of the *articuli puri et mixti* will receive a more satisfactory form. Certainly, God does not at first become what He is by means of Christianity; His eternal perfection precedes historic Christianity; and just because God is eternally that which is expressed in the true

idea of God, and that which the Christian apprehends Him to be, He is the foundation of Christianity. But this idea of God has the stamp of Christian just for this reason, that in Him and nowhere else Christianity has, so to speak, its *Pre-existence*, which becomes manifest in time in order that God may reveal Himself in Christianity. That the pre-existent principle of Christianity is to be ascribed to Christianity is indubitable. Similarly the other doctrines of the first Part will approve themselves Christian by tendency towards historical Christianity. In Christianity they have their essential place by virtue of that God, who always tends to perfectly reveal Himself. Accordingly, it might be said that the Fundamental Part of the System of Faith (or Apologetics, in so far as Apologetics has to verify the central doctrines of Christianity) treats of the eternal and objective principle of the existence of Christianity, according as it embraces the active potentiality of growth in fact or history, and the laws of that growth. This first Part has to present Christianity in its *genetic self-verification*.

5. The Fundamental Doctrine thus falls into three main divisions :—

- I. The Doctrine of God.
- II. The Doctrine of the Creature, especially Man.
- III. The Doctrine of the communion or union of God and man by means of the divine Self-revelation, or the Doctrine of Religion.

This partition is justified by what precedes. It is generally agreed that religion is a positive relation between God and man, which presupposes both difference and unity. If there were no difference in the two parties, there would be no religion, whether the identity of the two be called God or called man. Religion is as impossible for God alone, as for man apart from God. A mere relation between man and himself, even were that relation the relation of the natural man to his true being, no one calls religion. Again, if there was not only a difference between man and God, but an entire absence of relation, God and man would in that case be absolutely separated from and indifferent to each other; in that case, also, there would be no such thing as religion. Hence results at once the place of Religion in the System. We

cannot scientifically begin with it, as is so often done. It is a synthesis of two factors; it is a very composite idea. Indeed, the mode of union possible, and which is called religion, will depend upon the nature of the two parties. Only through a correct settlement of those basic ideas can religion appear as something not merely contingent, but necessarily founded in the nature of both—the nature of God and the nature of man. But if, accordingly, the Doctrine of Religion can only occupy the third place, an opinion may arise, as far as the relation of the two first divisions is concerned, against the precedence of the Doctrine of God; it may be considered that such a doctrine presupposes the existence of man, either if there is to be any talk of the consciousness of God at all, or any talk about God. Man is, of course, first in that (subjectively phenomenal) treatment, in which the history of the growth of faith is handled; and so far we have allowed the correctness of this initial position (§§ 2–11). But this treatment lies behind us; we have now to seek the objective relations and course of facts. It must not seem as if man and his consciousness verified God (§ 12, 3). That would be contrary to faith also, especially to Christian faith, which is conscious of its knowledge of God as divinely given, and of God as the principle of being and knowing, and as the absolute causality, independent as to verification of any but Himself (*von keiner Begründung ausser ihm abhängende*).



**PART I.**



**THE SYSTEM OF CHRISTIAN FAITH.**

**FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE.**

## FIRST MAIN DIVISION.

### THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.

(Θεολογία.)

THIS doctrine parts into three divisions:—

- I. *The Doctrine of the Godhead*, or of the Divine Being, Essence and Attributes generally.
- II. *The Doctrine of God as the essentially Triune*, or the Doctrine of the Internal Self-Revelation of God.
- III. *The Doctrine of God as the Revealer of Himself in a World*, or the Doctrine of the Economic Trinity.

## FIRST DIVISION.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE GODHEAD.

#### § 15.—*Plan.*

THE Doctrine of God is to be so treated that the doctrine of the divine attributes may be placed in an internal relation to the doctrine of the Being and Essence (*Sein und Wesen*) of God. Only the appropriate conjunction of the Divine Being, Essence, and Attributes can lead to that idea of God, according to which He is not merely an unconditioned Infinitude, but in Himself objectively and eternally conditioned. The true idea of God will bestow upon us the possibility, when His existence is recognised, of treating His divine attributes in their multiplicity and abiding diversity, and also in their internal interdependence or unity, inasmuch as the Divine Essence is recognised, in conformity with the filiated doctrine of attributes, simply as the living realization of the Divine Essence.

LITERATURE.—In the struggle with Gnosticism, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Clement defended the divine attributes of Omnipotence (against Dualism), of Righteousness (against Pantheism), and of Love (against Deism and Judaism). The writing of Dionysius the Areopagite, *De divinis nominibus*, presents a mystic theological doctrine blended with Neoplatonism. — Augustine, *De civitate Dei* and *De Trinitate* (comp. I. A. Dorner, *Augustinus, sein theol. System und seine religions-philosophische Anschauung*, 1873). Johannes Scotus Erigena, *De divisione naturæ*. Anselm, *Monologium* and *Proslogium*. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* and *Summa adv. gentiles*. Raymund a Sabunde, *Theologia naturalis (liber naturæ)*, treated of by Matzke and Nitzsch, comp. Niedners *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, 1859. Calvin, *Institutio relig. christ.*, book

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1. THE BEING OF GOD.—The customary treatment of the Doctrine of God is, first to speak of the Being of God, especially of the different proofs for the divine existence, in which connection the results of *Theologia naturalis* are brought into special prominence, and then to advance straightway to the Attributes without interposing a doctrine of the divine Essence. This separate treatment is attended by peculiar evils in the apprehension of the fundamental idea of God; and it is easily shown, that the Doctrine of the Being of God cannot be handled apart from the Attributes, or from the Essence which first displays the contents of the Divine Being. If the Being of God is treated apart from the Attributes, the Attributes appear to be casual additions. In mere naked Being as such, in this abstraction from everything concrete, there is nothing expressed or given respecting Attributes and Essence; they cannot be deduced thence; they must therefore be accepted traditionally, and thus casually, from the popular representations. Now the relation between the subject and its predicates may, when God is the subject, by no means be a contingent one. It may be fortuitous whether other subjects, men for example, have certain predicates or not. But it cannot be accidental as regards the Deity, whether the predicates belonging to His idea do actually belong to Him, or whether any perfection can be added

or subtracted. Conversely, certain attributes or predicates may belong to many subjects of one species in common; one and the same attribute may be applicable to many, and as regards such predicate, it is a matter of indifference whether it applies to one subject or many, whether the predicate has a single or a manifold existence. But every one will see that it is otherwise with the idea of God; here the predicates must be united much more closely with the subject than is the case with other subjects; indeed, certain predicates can only belong to one subject, to *the* subject, who is called God. Thus there is Absoluteness, the necessity of being, which extends throughout the entire divine Essence. If, now, it is said that it is not the *Being* of God in general which appears in the proofs for the existence of God, but a special mode of being, namely, *absolute and necessary* being,—that the Being of God is thus a different thing from abstract universal being, assuredly that more precise definition of the divine Being would be a commencement to unite the divine Essence with the divine Being, such as we demand as indispensable to the characterization of the divine Being. Generally speaking, there is no idea of a thing apart from its essential characteristics. Before, therefore, the essential and constituent elements of the fundamental idea are gained, the existence of *God* is at any rate non-proven. Thus it follows that the proof for the divine existence and the proof for the essential and constituent attributes are not two proofs, but are one and indivisible, and can only attain completeness side by side. The proof for the existence of God has only been plenary completed with the proofs for these attributes. The doctrines of the Being of God, and of His Essence and His Attributes, are therefore to be combined at one and the same time. As far as the *proofs for the existence of God* are concerned, their number should arouse suspicion. Since they are not wont to be placed in any internal relation to one another, it may well appear as if a choice is offered, so that he who cannot agree to one, may hold to another. But there is chance and arbitrariness in the game. *One* proof, if it is stringent, is not simply adequate, but also alone permissible. A number could only be allowed, when the matter in question is not grasped in its centre, which must of necessity be one, but only in its relations and references, which may indeed

permit an endless multitude of subjective reflections, just because the central point of the thing is not clear. Since, finally, the proofs relate to different attributes, and the Being of God is only verified by the establishment of the attributes, it follows that the proofs for the Being of God must become one proof. There can therefore be no talk of the Being of God with any definiteness apart from the Essence and the Attributes.

2. THE DIVINE ESSENCE.—Conversely also there can be no talk of the Essence of God apart from His Being, supposing necessary being is part of His Essence. But when that truth is recognised, even when absolute and necessary being is shown to be the divine Essence, there still remains the difficult question of the distinction between the Essence and the Attributes, and unanimity has not yet been attained. Some understand by the Essence, as contrasted with the Attributes, the absolute divine Substance as the absolutely indivisible Being. The sequel of such a view is, that the attributes come into no internal relation with the essence, or, since there can be no contingency in God, are regarded as something which has no objective, but simply a subjective importance. But God would Himself thus become objectively a mere empty "Oυ", or the "Oυτως" "Oυ". But who will concede that the Essence of God is thought, if, for example, Wisdom, Love, and Righteousness are not also attributed to that nature? Or the Essence, to have something definite therein, is found by preference in certain fundamental attributes or root ideas.<sup>1</sup> Then arises the question how the unity of the idea of God and the multiplicity of attributes are related to that conception. Then these root-ideas again may be themselves differently defined; for example, the Doctrine of the Essence of God may be said to be the provisional description of the divine Infinitude, Absoluteness, and Necessity.<sup>2</sup> Then comes the question, how to advance from this indefinite idea to attributes, and whether the divine Essence is sufficiently described by the predicates of Absolute-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Philippi, *Kirchliche Glaubenslehre*, II. pp. 17, etc.; but Philippi desires these main or fundamental attributes to be so thought that their distinction is not actually present in the divine Essence, but is only necessitated "by our understanding, and according to our subjective position."

<sup>2</sup> Twisten.

ness and Necessity?<sup>1</sup> If, with Nitzsch, the divine Essence is thought of "as Spirit, as Love and Lord, comprehended as personal goodness,"<sup>2</sup> conversely the question arises, whether by this description of the divine Essence the doctrine of attributes is not forestalled? So much will be readily conceded: with the Essence of God we think His unique idea, as it is re-absorbed into itself out of the multiplicity of elements which constitute that idea, and thus becomes a unique living totality; but in the attributes we think the Essence of God unfolding itself into a multiplicity of determinations. There, the essential unity, aim, and result are given; here, the multiplicity of attributes springs forth from the eternal and living unity. In order to bring both elements to view and compass the whole problem, we shall have first, from the multiplicity of the divine attributes which is to be gained, to find their unity, and thus to find the central divine Essence. We must then endeavour, from the rightly defined divine unity, to describe constructively the multiplicity of the attributes existent in the divine Essence as the eternal radiance issuing from Him.

3. Nevertheless, as far as the doctrine of the *divine attributes* is specially concerned, that doctrine is in great confusion.

(a) For one thing, a recognised definition of attribute is wanting, and unanimity upon this point, whether all declarations concerning God, even those which state what God is not, are attributes; further, whether the acts and purposes of God, as determinations of His will, may be called attributes; whether the permanent alone belongs to these attributes, or the mutable also, as Thomasius and others would have it.

(b) Does an objective importance attach itself to the attributes as distinct from one another, although by no means separate, or does only a subjective importance belong to them?

(c) Are they all co-ordinate?

(d) How are they to be reached or to be derived?

(e) How, finally, are they to be divided?

<sup>1</sup> *Vorlesungen über Dogmatik*, II. 1, § 32, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Nitzsch, *System der christl. Lehre*, 6th edit. 1851, § 61. Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk*, 2d edit. vol. I. pp. 18, etc., § 8, regards absolute Personality with absolute Will and Self-consciousness, as well as absolute Being or Life, as the definition of the divine Essence. Frank's statement is better (*System der christl. Wahrheit*, I. 116), that the essential moments of the absoluteness of the supreme principle of existence are absolute unity and fulness of reality.



IN THE FIRST PLACE, as far as the DEFINITION of Attribute is concerned, a distinction is not seldom made between the so-called relative and absolute (immanent or essential) attributes; *absolute* attributes are modalities [*modalitäten*—modifications] which appertain to a being by virtue of his essential determinations (Thomasius, who follows Rothe<sup>1</sup>), and which constitute that being. They are also called immanent determinations of the absolute personality of God in relation to Himself, amongst which Thomasius ranks Power or Freedom, absolute Intelligence, and Happiness (which he nevertheless distinguishes from those determinations which arise from the analysis of absolute Personality, absolute Will, Self-consciousness, and Life). The *relative* attributes, on the other hand, are Omniscience, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Justice. They are attributes in relation to other existence, objectifying themselves in relation to other existence, affecting that existence and affected thereby. These do not appertain to God in Himself, but solely in relation to the world, therefore God may abrogate or limit them.<sup>2</sup> Relative attributes, therefore, according to Thomasius, are modalities, which the divine Essence assumes in relation to other existence, the self-determined modificability of God in relation to another. But it scarcely helps the clearness of exposition to make a distinction between “essential attributes” and “the peculiar determinations of the divine Essence” upon which the former attributes rest. A precise distinction between essence and attribute Thomasius has not once furnished in reference to the absolute attributes (also called by him immanent). As far as the relative attributes are concerned, they certainly must not be separated from the immanent Essence of God. They are, in his esteem, actions of that Essence, answering to that Essence. It is not themselves, but their emergence, which is conditioned by things without. Strictly speaking, they are therefore simply divine activities. Only that which is permanent and underlies these activities as the foundation of

<sup>1</sup> Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk*, 1856, 2d edit. §§ 8, 10, pp. 52, etc. He partly follows Rothe, *Ethik*, I. p. 78, 1st edit. (2d edit. I. pp. 144, etc., § 38), according to whom attributes are relations of God to Himself, which comprehend Deity, and which constitute in their unity the divine Self-apperception. But these immanent or essential attributes Thomasius desires to distinguish from the determinations of Essence proper (*Persönlichkeit*, p. 178 of above work).

<sup>2</sup> Thomasius, p. 54.

this varying modificability would be truly described as an attribute.

But if that which deserves to be called an attribute is so intimately connected with the divine Essence that the Essence is constituted by the attribute, there is no room to speak of a possible abrogation or limitation of attributes, or of variation and modificability of the divine attributes. The "relative attributes" are either divine acts, or else they rest upon the divine Essence as that determination of the Essence in which the possible relation to the world is contained. Rothe is therefore more correct when he says that the attributes are peculiar forms of the manifestation of the essential and internal divine determinations, to which he of course adds that they are evoked by the relation of the Essence to other things.<sup>1</sup> Upon the absolute attributes, according to Rothe, rest all the relations of God to the world. The relative attributes are, in his opinion, although indirectly, absolute and immanent,<sup>2</sup> and therefore he cannot concede an abrogation or limitation of them. The true view is a consequence of the inquiry, whether there exists a subordination or merely a co-ordination amongst the divine attributes.

The SECOND QUESTION is, Are the divine attributes mere *subjective* human representations, or do they answer to something *objective* in God? On the one hand, the reply may be made, that there are no attributes in the divine Essence; that Essence being universally similar, absolutely one, perfectly complete and destitute of attributes, at most the different divine activities or relations to the world can be pointed out as His attributes. So said John of Damascus, following the Neoplatonists, and especially the Areopagite. Or it may be said that attributes exist in God which are objectively distinct from each other.

<sup>1</sup> 2d edit. vol. I. p. 146. Rothe treats the attributes partly as the divine Essence, as the relations of that Essence to itself, namely, as absolute, immanent attributes; partly as forms of the manifestation of the essence to others, i.e. as relative, transient attributes; whilst Thomasius seeks to construct yet a third series (for the purpose of his Kenotic Christology), which may give expression to the varying modificability of God, not merely of His action, but of His existence relatively to the world, or for the sake of the world. To this capacity for modification, which can be limited or temporarily abrogated, self-consciousness is then to be added, it is true, according to his doctrine of the Logos, to answer his purpose.

<sup>2</sup> Rothe, p. 148.

Between these two views yet a third arises, which sees, indeed, no distinction in the divine Essence, but which does not ascribe a mere subjective character to the attributes we assign to God. A divine Essence, according to this view, rather presents itself under many aspects; God, though one, displays Himself variously to us. But if it is verily *God* who manifests Himself diversely, and not merely our organization which reflects Him in different ways, that fact refers us back to objective distinctions in God; for otherwise He would display, not Himself, but something else different to Himself, and substituted for Himself. But if God does not show *Himself* in His attributes, the distinction between them is simply subjective. This point of view accordingly conducts us back to one of the two previous opinions; these we have now to estimate.

The opinion that the divine attributes are mere subjective conceptions must end in plunging them all into a unity without diversity, and, since we cannot think without definite ideas, that would be an absolute denial of any knowledge of God, so that indefinite presentiments or sentiments at best remain to us of Him. That is a point of view, indeed, widely received in the ancient Church, which even Augustine favoured from his Neoplatonist days. As when he says: "Happiness, Greatness, Wisdom, Truth, Goodness, are not different things, but the same."<sup>1</sup> Praiseworthy as it is in Augustine to endeavour to combine the divine attributes more closely with the divine Essence, and to exhibit the Essence in the attributes, yet in him the effort took the form of saying of every attribute, that it is, properly speaking, the whole divine Essence, *i.e.* all the attributes are identical. For things which are equal to a third thing (the divine Essence) are equal to each other. But then all distinctions in God are expunged as objective existences, and we are forced to the opinion that the divine Essence proper is merely indefinite and infinite being, which, by virtue of the absence of all determination, is equivalent to infinite emptiness, and scarcely distinguishable from Nothing, just as the Kabbalists and Mystics, who share this view, often call God the *ℳ*, the *Nihil*, or the Void, although it may be the constant opinion

<sup>1</sup> *De Trinitate*, vi. 7.

that this infinite Being cherishes within Himself an infinite fulness. The contrast between this Augustinian Simplicity of the divine Essence, which excludes all distinctions from God and the doctrine of the Trinity, which it is still hoped to retain, needs simple mention.

The Metaphysics of the Middle Ages, and especially of Thomas, does not essentially transcend this point of view ; with the exception of Duns Scotus, to whom the attributes are *formalitates realiter distinctæ*.<sup>1</sup> And Thomas of Aquino and Augustine have remained the standards for this opinion in Dogmatics, down to the preceding century. The Reformation possessed, it is true, sufficient impetus for framing a new conception, but the Reformation was not directly a reformation of Metaphysics or of the Doctrine of God, but of the Doctrine of Salvation. It is precisely *Theology* which, in its application to Anthropology and Soteriology, has been cultivated independently of the Reformation. Our great dogmatic theologians of the seventeenth century, John Gerhard and Quenstedt, teach that the attributes are simply the divine Essence itself conceived by means of our inadequate ideas, that the divine attributes *nec ab essentia nec inter se realiter seu ex natura rei distinguuntur*.<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, it is true, also says in another place, "They are not merely subjective and arbitrary (*rationis ratiocinantis*), but the product *rationis ratiocinatae*—that is, *we are compelled* so to think them ; but this apprehension, nevertheless, is not on that account an apprehension of the divine in itself, it is an apprehension of God, as He wishes to be for our sakes ;" further, he says, "The divine Simplicity does not abolish the *veritas*, but only the combination of the essential attributes ;" but he immediately adds, "The representation made by the attributes cannot be of something diverse in God, whether from each other or from His Essence."<sup>3</sup> The distinctions are subjective, and are not founded upon an internal distinction in the divine Essence. His opinion is that God *possesses* all the excellences which we desire to

<sup>1</sup> The same opinion appears in some modern writers ; see Baumgarten, *Glaubenslehre*, I. 214 ; Marheineke, *Vorles. u. Dogmatik*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> J. Gerhard, *Loci*, I. § 108. Quenstedt, *Systema*, viii. sec. 2: *Si proprie et accurate loqui velimus Deus nullas habet proprietates*.

<sup>3</sup> Quenstedt, *Systema*, cap. viii. sec. 2.

express by the word *attribute*; but they exist in God otherwise than they do in our understanding, namely, non-distinct. But what is without distinction is identical. But if, for example, the divine attributes of knowing and willing are absolutely identical, their activity is also absolutely identical as far as God is concerned, and God wills everything that He knows, the consequences of which statement are readily estimated. Further, although the unity, in which all difference becomes swallowed up, may also be conceived of as a something higher,—indeed, as that in which the whole reality of the divine attributes becomes preserved as in a fulness and unity unattainable by us,—still this preservation is only seemingly possible. If, indeed, something in God actually corresponds with our diverse conceptions of God, then God actually has diverse attributes. But if that by which one attribute is distinguished from another is abolished in God, the essence of that attribute is abolished, and what remains is, regarded as an idea, not something higher, but something lower—wholly indefinite existence.

There are mainly three reasons which concur to approve the view that the divine attributes are merely subjective human conceptions. The *first* has to do with the interests of *religion*, and may easily mislead. The inscrutable Essence of God, and His Majesty, His Unapproachableness and transcendent Sublimity, His absolute Solity and Incomparable-ness, seem to correspond with the acceptance of the view that our apprehension of God is absolutely inadequate. But mere absolute transcendence removes God from us in a deistic fashion, and thus damages the interests of piety by a false elevation foreign to Holy Scripture. By its doctrine of the creation in the divine image, Scripture demands by preference a certain resemblance to God. He who ascribes to the divine attributes an objective significance, does not assert in the slightest degree that the human spirit has a perfect apprehension of God, but only that the attributes, by which he frames God to his own mind in no arbitrary but a necessary fashion, although they embrace incomplete thoughts, include objectively true ones, *e.g.* the divine Wisdom, Righteousness, Love, and Might: we think them, though we cannot think them out.

A *second* reason for the mere subjective meaning of the

divine attributes is the uncontroverted *Simplicity* of God. Still Simplicity is not to be confounded with absence of internal distinction. It is simply contradictory to the separate existence of those manifold qualities which would leave a mere mechanical unity by combination. That such unity would follow upon the objective diversity of the attributes, would first require proof. If theologians cleave to trinitarian distinctions in God in face of His simplicity, it is illogical if the same men fancy themselves compelled to deny the objectivity of the divine attributes out of love for the divine Simplicity.

A *third* pillar of the same opinion is found in the widespread prejudice, that if we ascribe to God definite objective attributes, we thus introduce a *limitation* in God, since every definition is a limitation, an imputation of finality, an anthropomorphism. For if the attributes are actually distinct, one is not another, and they thus receive a limitation or shrinkage, and are at the same time rendered finite. This is the proposition of Spinoza—*omnis determinatio est negatio*. Every *determinatio* is certainly a *terminus*, a limitation in idea, which excludes the possibility of A equalling not-A, or of a thing being its opposite. God, if He is infinite, cannot therefore be thought of at the same time as finite. Infinitude excludes the idea of finitude, and constitutes a certain limitation relative thereto. But it need not be inferred, as is so often the case, that the infinite is limited in its reality or rendered finite by the fact that it is not finite, or by the fact that it has its ideal limit in the finite. This meaning does not in any way consort with the apothegm of Spinoza's, because there is also a negation of negation or imperfection. The more recent philosophy has therefore rightly and decidedly opposed this position of Spinoza's, so far as its meaning seems to be that every definition expresses a lack or a wrest of reality; thus Hegel and Schelling say, although Franz von Baader advocates the opposite view, *omnis determinatio est positio* (which is just *negatio negationis*).—Still less does the limitation of the divine attributes follow from their plurality and distinctiveness. There is no contradiction in thinking of God as infinitely powerful as well as absolutely intelligent. Both these attributes may co-exist, distinct and yet interdependent. They

may be comprehended in a higher idea without prejudice to their difference. What would be the consequence if there existed in God absolutely nothing definite, and, indeed, if He were Himself in no way definite? Nothing but this, that no limit in idea, that nothing which distinguished Him from another or from His opposite, could have any objective truth; that God might therefore be the opposite of everything He is, and at the same time, lest this opposite should constitute a limitation. But a thought, which is at the same time its contrary, is not a thought, it is a contradiction. What excludes nothing, not even its direct opposite, includes nothing; what is at the same moment the very opposite of itself, is a nullity, a no-thing as well as a no-thought. The idea of God, of course, supposes a self-limitation as regards imperfection, since it excludes imperfection. The idea is, of course, necessarily and logically circumscribed by its possible opposite. But as the negation of imperfection that is a real perfection; and as the negation of confusion that is logical completeness or truth. We cannot therefore permit the Infinite and Absolute (that which is loosed from limitation, *ἀπόλυστον*) to be confounded with the Unconditioned, the Infinite with the Indefinite. The doctrine of the ancient theologians since the Greek period, that the divine attributes are merely subjectively and not objectively distinct from each other and from the divine Essence, Schleiermacher especially has defended in modern times with acute dialectic skill in the interest of his special position—that we can hold God merely in our sentiment, and not in our apprehension; but in drawing the inferences from this opinion, quite regardless of ulterior consequences, he first made truly sensible the necessity for a consistent construction of the Doctrine of God. The consistent application of the doctrine of our more ancient Dogmatics, which he here defended, makes it impossible to draw the precise distinction between God and the world, or places the Deity, so far as He is not supposed to be the world, but absolutely incognizable, in a deistic position of transcendence. “All attributes which we ascribe to God,” he says, “denote nothing separate in God, but only something separate in the manner in which we refer our feeling of dependence to Him.”<sup>1</sup> Philippi

<sup>1</sup> *Chr. Glaube*, I. § 50.

opposes this view.<sup>1</sup> What says he himself? "We only know God as He exists relatively to us in revelation, not as He is in Himself, in a form answering to our thought, in relation to which He would reveal Himself." That sounds as if God desires to reveal nothing of what He is in Himself (and to what He is in Himself His love belongs), as if God could and would reveal Himself otherwise than He is, or as if the creature were, so to speak, material which *must* distort the pure divine ray, and were able to thwart the divine desire of revelation, and that, as has been well observed, not because of sin, but because of its creaturely nature,—an opinion which must lead to Dualism.

Since God cannot on the one hand desire to appear otherwise than He is, and since God does not on the other hand prevent a dualistic force in His revealing will, there only remains to see in the divine revelations of Himself, revelations of what He is and how He is (not revelations of what and how He is not), and thus to see the revelation of objective attributes. The old Lutheran theologians were wont to upbraid the Reformed that they simulated, or received only an apparent revelation of the divine Will (in relation to the proclamation of the universality of Grace). In the case before us we should accept merely apparent revelations with reference to the divine Essence itself.<sup>2</sup> That Simplicity of God which knows no distinction, upon which even Philippi relies (and a knowledge of which he asserts, whilst his positions lead to an absence of such knowledge), the acosmistic Pantheists have always asserted without reserve, from the Eleatics to the pantheistic Mystics.

Thus, then, we turn to the other view, that the differences between the divine attributes have an objective significance. Amongst the ancients, the Socinians as well as

<sup>1</sup> Philippi, vol. II. Remark 35. "In the formula of Schleiermacher's (§ 50), which sounds so ecclesiastical, there is latent the very abyss of Pantheism." It is simply remarkable that Philippi defends, against Thomasius, the same doctrine of the objective indistinguishableness of the divine attributes and of the necessary anthropomorphism (i.e. the rendering the divine attributes finite by our thought), in which view Lipsius and all modern writers follow him, who find in the "Phantasie" or in "Vorstellung" a necessary finitizing of the infinite, without at least leaving to thought some other way to objective truth. The case is otherwise with Biedermann and Pfeiderer.

<sup>2</sup> And that, too, in the name of the Lutheran Theology, as the champion of which Philippi controverts Thomasius.



Duns Scotus maintain this opinion, and amongst the more recent writers, S. J. Baumgarten, J. G. Walch, and Reinhard. Further, Martensen, Thomasius, Rothe, and others endeavour to reach the same point of view. As regards this matter, it may easily happen that, in order to think with due precision of God, and in order to distinguish Him precisely from all that is not God, God is made finite and conceived as a human individual; He is limited in knowledge and will, or even thought of as developing and growing, and generally as mutable, although an infinite possibility of will and knowledge is, it is true, attributed to Him, but not equally so the absolute realization (*actus purissimus*) of His being and powers. In that case He will be co-ordinated with the world, and as an individual will be opposed to the world. That He is and must be the universal and absolute ground of *all* being, is not taken into consideration. This is the deistic evasion to which the Socinians incline. Nevertheless, it is no necessary consequence, if what has just been proved hold good, that infinitude and distinction or definiteness in the divine attributes are mutually harmonious. The acceptance of the objectivity of the divine attributes does not simply concern the interests of knowledge, but religion also demands just such acceptance and checks absolute identification. Evangelical faith does not allow an identification of righteousness with love or grace, but a distinction between them without separation. So undoubtedly volition and knowledge are united in God, but to identify the two would be equivalent to saying that what God knows He also wills, an inference which is not permissible as regards evil. The divine knowledge has a wider reach than the divine will without imperiling the divine unity. He comprehends evil in His knowledge although not in His desire, and evil is therefore not embraced in His creative will. Just so God does not will everything which He has the power *in abstracto* to do.

THIRDLY, But even where an objective significance is conceded to the divine attributes, error is wont to arise upon this point—all the attributes are regarded as *co-ordinate*. In God there is supposed to be neither higher nor lower, as even Quenstedt maintained as a consequence of his negation of objective distinction in the attributes. For subordination would seem to conflict with the homogeneity or simplicity of

God. But if they are merely co-ordinate, their mutual relations would be a matter of indifference, even though objective significance were conceded to them. In that case, their internal relation to each other and to the idea of Deity does not appear. But if there is to be a knowledge of God, the stress lies upon apprehending their internal relation, their objective combination, to which, indeed, a disposing and governing principle existent in God will attach itself, and this principle is opposed to the mere co-ordination of all affirmations concerning the Deity. If we had knowledge of such a principle in God, by which He is Himself absolutely supreme, that principle might be called the all-governing principle, the *divine Essence*, in the sense of that which is innermost and highest in God, and contradistinguished from the attributes as the things governed, which are made use of as the material and *media*, so to speak, for the principle or essence. Such a principle, by which the question previously left open as to how the essence and attributes are related to each other would be advanced towards solution, we have thus to seek, and that in such a way that none of the attributes may be merely contingent in the divine Essence.

4. DERIVATION OF THE ATTRIBUTES. — Since the days of Scholasticism, three methods have been adopted for the knowledge of the divine :—the method of negation (*negatio*), namely, of that which is essentially incompatible with the idea of God ; that of elevation (*eminentia*), namely, that of the excellences ; and the method of causality (*causalitas*). The first negatives imperfections ; the second sublimates excellences which we see in the finite world, by limiting or negating their imperfect form. The first method would of itself only arrive at a negative result, at an expression of what God is not, at no attribute therefore. Inasmuch as the negation of the imperfect only completes itself by virtue of those excellences pertaining to God, and inasmuch as the insisting upon an excellence may be allowably regarded as the negation of its limitation, we may say that the first method is retained in the second under a positive and unlimited form. Negation simply has a place in regard to Deity, because negative imperfections are excluded by the opposite excellences. The two first methods are consequently connected. But those

methods already presuppose a knowledge of God, by virtue of which what is inappropriate to the divine idea is excluded, and what is appropriate is adopted. The method of elevation possibly also led to a merely quantitative distinction between God and the creature. God might be thus regarded as an infinitely elevated man. But we shall see in the doctrine of the divine Solity that the distinction is to be more profoundly thought of, and not in a mere quantitative manner. There belongs to the divine idea something determinate, which raises Deity above comparison or mere quantitative difference. The same is true of His absolute Essence, His Asëity. But this distinction would be as little secured by the *via negationis* as by the *via eminentiæ*. It would also follow from the merely quantitative conception of the difference between God and man, either that man could never become perfect, or that he must become God in order to be perfect. The *third* method seeks in God for the cause of finite realities or excellences. But by this way absolute attributes were not to be reached, because the cause of finite effects does not warrant an inference to the infinitude of the cause. Thus the method of elevation, as quantitatively infinite, and the method of negation, as elevating above all imperfections, would need to be combined in order thereto. And it is evident that in all these three methods a knowledge of God is already presupposed, which confers the ability to correctly manipulate the exclusion, position, and elevation. Further, since there is an infinite quantity of the finite to be conceived as effect, we should only have, provided by these three methods, even if they were combined, an incoherent result, concerning which we should not know whether it would coalesce into an unity.<sup>1</sup> Finally, each of these three methods relate solely to the sphere of discursive thought and inference, whilst an idea or representation of God already possessed and always previously gained must conduct to the exposition of the divine attributes.

5. Still more doubtful is the DIVISION of the divine attri-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Steudel, *Tübinger Zeitschr.* 1830; Elwert, *Versuch einer Deduction der göttlichen Eigenschaften* (he is in sympathy with Schleiermacher); Steffensen, *Die Lehre von den göttlichen Eigenschaften*, in Pelt's *Mitarbeiten*, 1842; Bruch, *loc. cit.*; Fortlage, *Die göttlichen Eigenschaften*.

butes. The following are the chief divisions:—One division is into *attributa negativa* (those obtained *via negationis*) and *positiva*, ἀποφατικὰ and καταφατικὰ. But the negative attributes, if they are actually attributes, also contain something positive (as has recently been said), and nothing positive can be thought of which does not exclude, by the law of contradiction, its opposite. Thus the so-called negative attributes, such as Infinity, and the positive, such as Holiness, cannot be distinguished as positive and negative. A second division is into *attributa absoluta* and *relativa*, *immanentia* and *transitiva*, and *passive* and *active*. Similar is Nitzsch's division into attributes pertaining to the divine separation from the world and attributes pertaining to the divine relation to the world. The former are Eternity, Immensity, Wisdom, Holiness, Happiness, Majesty. The latter are Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Omniscience, Love, Righteousness and Truth, Veracity. The absolute, immanent and passive, are those which must be thought of in God apart from the world. The others are such as are revealed in the divine causality. But those attributes which reveal themselves in the world, are also immanent in God, and those which are immanent are revealed. For Infinity and Eternity themselves are at least revealed in the knowledge of the reasoning creature, into which they enter. So that this division also is insufficient. Absolutely passive the immanent attributes are not, so far as they express anything more than a mere negation. We have to think of the divine attributes as essentially active, active in the eternal divine Self-determination.—Bruch would only allow *attributa relativa*, those which express a relation to the world, because we can know nothing of God except by His revelation in the world.<sup>1</sup> The question is, whether God can only reveal something else than Himself, and not also Himself, as the Absolute therefore; and in that case whether God is only in the world in such a way that He has a relation to the world, but not to Himself. If the reply is affirmative, Pantheism would be the only consistent mode of thought. If God cannot or will not grant us some knowledge of His essential Being, but only of His Being in the world, He necessarily reveals in the world what is not Himself, something different to Himself. The

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 69, 77.

distinction into *attributa communicabilia* and *incommunicabilia* is akin to this view. We need only say that, with the exception of the divine Asëity (in which the absoluteness of the Deity is included, and concerning which it is allowable to ask whether it can be called an attribute and interpenetrate all attributes), all attributes are communicable; and that, conversely, all participation of the creature in the divine attributes is so tempered that the creature does not possess as God does, *a se*, and thus its attributes are not absolute. What lies at the basis of most of these well-known distinctions, is the distinction between attributes which belong to God in Himself, and which belong to him relatively to the world. But the divine relation to the world has its ceaseless base in internal divine attributes, and adds nothing which must not be grounded in God.<sup>1</sup>

Schleiermacher deduces the divine attributes from the different relations of the absolute sentiment of dependence to the consciousness of self and of the external world—(1) So far as the contrast of sin and grace has not yet been introduced into the sentiment of dependence (Eternity, Omnipresence, Omniscience); (2) So far as the sentiment of dependence has become united with the consciousness of contrast or of sin, there answers to that sentiment the consciousness of the Righteousness and Holiness of God; (3) There answers to the sentiment of dependence, so far as it is capable of transcending the opposition by grace, the attributes of Love and Wisdom. There is already contained in this classification according to a mere subjective point of departure, an association of some objective value. It is the same with Romang's distinction into physical or metaphysical and ethical attributes<sup>2</sup> (negatively ethical

<sup>1</sup> Twenten also treats at the outset of the idea of God, according to His absolute independence, that is, of the absolute and necessary Being of God, and treats subsequently of God according to His relation to the world. There arises the question, Is that absolute independence to be regarded as the source of the relative attributes? In the case of an affirmative reply, they are objectively grounded in the absolute and necessary Being of God, and so far are not simply relative, but have a significance in the immanent nature of God; in the other case, they only arise by means of the world or for our consideration, and are not objectively divine attributes. Of course we know nothing as yet systematically of the world and of man; it is impossible therefore to divide into *att. absoluta* and *relativa*.

<sup>2</sup> Romang, pp. 237, etc.; Frank likewise. Schweizer has also consistently used this very influential distinction. Lipsius approaches his point of view.

= Righteousness and Holiness, positively ethical = Love and Wisdom), to which Liebner adds logical attributes also. Instead of the designations physical, logical, and ethical, others speak of the attributes of being, knowing, and willing, to which Hahn further adds the attribute of feeling,—an expression which is only objectionable,<sup>1</sup> if the thought is originated thereby of a pathologic, passive mutation in God.

### § 16.—*Cognizability of God.*

There is a knowledge of God, although not a perfect but only a progressive knowledge. God is as apprehensible as He is inscrutable. It is neither impossible nor superfluous to investigate the basis of faith in God. The advance from religious certainty to scientific (§§ 12, 13) has so to deal with the doctrine of the so-called proofs for the existence of God, that this doctrine, in order to produce complete content, may be at once a doctrine of the Essence and the Attributes of God.

1. Were proof equivalent to making a proposition and deducing or deriving from a higher class, to wish to prove God might rather be called denying Him. But the function of proof is itself a confutation of such a view; that function is the constitution of a finite relation, and it is impossible to think of calling that knowledge God which proof produces. Even the Hegelian system does not commit itself to such absence of knowledge, although that system would have it that God Himself rises to self-knowledge by means of the knowledge in cognitive man, and that He gains and produces self-consciousness by the agency of human thought; in which opinion, nevertheless, there is, of course, a dependence of God latent, not a dependence of His Being in general, but of His spiritual realization by an infinite process. Proof would destroy itself if it did not leave room for God to be the absolute principle

<sup>1</sup> Even Pfeiderer, *Religionsphilos.* 1878, accepts the same opinion on p. 417, so far as there is understood by the phrase the pure self-inclusion of God as a unity of will and intelligence.

of knowledge as well as existence. God is not first established within us by proof, or subjectively. The first news of God does not come to us by proof. The scientific desire, at any rate, for proof in general, rather presupposes a previous mental representation of the objects for which search is scientifically made or verification desired; otherwise search becomes blind and discovery impossible. Even if discovered, it would not be known that discovery had been made. But, on the other hand, that religious knowledge which we have of God previous to scientific apprehension, is nevertheless not scientific apprehension, but only the starting-point.

2. Those, indeed, are not wanting, who would stop at the immediate religious knowledge which already embraces a kind of certainty, since they regard all proofs, that is, all scientific apprehension of the basis of faith in God, as *impious* and improper, or as impossible or superfluous. Arnobius holds the former opinion:—"Where there is living piety, the question has no meaning, it originates in sin." But the inquiry into the proof of the divine existence does not presuppose doubt, it only presupposes the vitality of the impulse to know; it seeks consecution, order, verification. The profound Anselm<sup>1</sup> gives very beautiful expression to this in the prayer which precedes his proof for the divine existence: "Lord, who givest insight, give me insight, that Thou art as I believe, and that Thou art what I believe." Others hold the proof *impossible*, because God is inaccessible to the understanding, and only accessible to the presentiment or glance of the reason. Indeed, "the understanding is a born atheist." Of this *dualism* of Jacobi's, we have previously spoken. As we may not say that a knowledge is given that God is, but not what He is, for the two things are inseparable; so also we may not say that we know what God is not, but not what He is. If we really know what attributes God cannot have, that knowledge presumes a definite idea, excluding what is false, and thus a positive idea is really the base of the negative. There is a religious interest which forbids a simple adherence to the divine incognizability, for religion requires the divine communicativeness, which must also have an active relation to knowledge. Human nature cannot be thought of so dualistically, or as so opposed

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. apologeticus adv. Respondentem pro Insipiente.*

to God, that the breach cannot be bridged even by God. If piety were indeed a mere dumb reverence, knowledge of God would be foreign and indifferent. But if piety is love, it will desire to apprehend its object. Besides Jacobi, Schleiermacher especially defended the denial of a positive knowledge of God.<sup>1</sup> Schleiermacher details his reasons at most length in his *Dialektik*. The mental representation of God (this is his weightiest reason), which is immediately connected with the sentiment of absolute dependence, comprehends the fact that God is the ultimate unity of all opposites, but He Himself is opposed to nothing, because to suppose that He is would be to limit and make Him finite. But still, all our knowledge presupposes one opposite, especially if the object of knowledge embraces everything,—the opposition at any rate between the object thought and the thinking subject. If God, therefore, became matter of knowledge, that could only be by His being contrasted with something, and so being made finite. Consequently, God, who must be elevated above all contrasts, could not be a matter for our knowledge, but only our feeling. But, first, even Schleiermacher allows, in controverting Acosmism, that opposites may develop themselves out of God. Then, disregarding this, God is not to be thought as so raised above all contrasts that He could even be His contrary or contradictory opposite. For otherwise He would be nothing definite, and not a thought (§ 15). Definiteness is not limitation. It is not necessary that God should be all existence exclusively, lest He should be limited by something else, which He is not. For that God should be something definite (His idea, therefore, being clearly removed from what He is not), is no limitation or imperfection, but a perfection. And the existence of another than God, side by side with Him, is just as little a limitation as far as He is concerned, since this

<sup>1</sup> Especially in England, Sir William Hamilton, and after him, Mansel, *The Limits of Religious Thought*, 4th edit. 1859, and Herbert Spencer's *Doctrine of the Unknowable*. Comp. my discussion upon the Mansel-Maurice controversy, *Jahrb. f. deutsche Theol.* VI. pp. 320, etc. As opposing this assertion of ignorance in divine things, see Calderwood, *Philosophy of the Infinite*, 1854, 2d edit. 1867, especially pp. 497, etc.; M'Cosh, *The Intuitions of the Mind*, 1860, and *An Examination of Mr. J. S. Mill's Philosophy*, 1866, pp. 1-23, 405, 406. Hamilton's main example is the thought we also defend, that the infinite or absolute is merely a negative thought.



other has his foundation in God, and depends for existence solely upon Him. If God is the ultimate unity and the ultimate cause, and if we know Him, we also know ourselves to have our basis in Him. We do not thus oppose ourselves to Him as co-ordinate subjects, but we apprehend ourselves as having our foundation in Him as the ultimate unity. Our existence and knowledge form, therefore, no limitation with respect to God; God, nevertheless, forms an absolute causality, a limitation with respect to our existence and knowledge; His causality, indeed, includes us, as things caused, in itself, and there is in that fact as little dualism as identity. Contrast is not contradiction. There simply belongs to apprehension a distinction between subject and object, which does not exclude a unity. Nor may the finiteness of the creature be made available against the possibility of a knowledge of God; for cognition and volition are as infinitely valuable as morality. If it be said that feeling, not cognition, perceives the infinite, that is illogical, because feeling is also the attribute of the creature.<sup>1</sup>

All those, finally, regard the proofs for the divine existence as *superfluous*, who would absolve Christian Doctrine from scientific form in the stricter sense. Such, for example, must be the opinion of the mere historic method, which identifies Dogmatics with Biblical Theology, or with the Exposition of Ecclesiastical Doctrine. That method goes so far as to desire to prove the existence of God from the authority of Scripture or of the Church. Inasmuch as, in Schleiermacher's esteem,

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton thinks, like Schleiermacher (comp. *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* VI. p. 320):—"Since we who know God are opposed to God as the object known, God is thought of as limited and relative, and therefore falsely. But the absoluteness of God consists very well with this contrast, since we so know God as the ultimate unity, that we do not except ourselves from being embraced under that unity as the ultimate causality, just as God also in His relation to us knows Himself to be our cause, and thus in His knowledge of Himself as the Creator, includes us at the same time as the created. But when Hamilton further says, that our knowledge cannot be knowledge of God, because we are relative beings, and our knowledge is also relative, whilst God is not relative but infinite, if we are relative as well as finite and imperfect, the consequence is the relativity or imperfection of our knowledge, but the impossibility of advance does not follow. But since relative signifies a relation, it may be said that God can also hold a relation of a positive kind to the finite, and that to Him. The finite and infinite do not exclude each other, although they are not logically the same thing, and thus they are logically ideas which limit

Christian Doctrine has to do, not with the objective apprehension of truth, but only with the description of pious emotions which have a security of their own, and thus with Christian empiricism, Schleiermacher banishes the proofs for the divine existence to Philosophy, just as he also frames in his *Dialektik* a kind of ontological proof. In the interests of religious certainty, Philippi also holds proof to be superfluous.<sup>1</sup> But the very development of the divine idea afforded by empirical piety cannot scientifically exist, unless it reaches the point where the reason must apprehend that the knowledge of God is divinely knit to the reason as such. But, of course, proof is nothing else than the becoming conscious that reason would not be reason, unless it thought of God as existing,—that reason only exists by accepting that God is. A materialistic mode of thought, which gives its sole attention to the finite, cannot be compelled to form and to cleave to the idea of God. But it can be shown that, if all reasonable and scientific apprehension is not renounced, and if knowing is regarded as willing thinking,—and this is an ethical question,—the acknowledgment of the idea of God is compulsory. Certainly to be pious there is no need of proof. But if it is nevertheless, necessary, in order to the existence of scientific theology, to apprehend the congruity of the consciousness of Christian faith with thought, the same necessity exists also for the apprehension of the congruity of the general consciousness of God with reason (see § 12). Further, the coalescence of the first and second creation is of universal importance, not

each other, for the creature can never even logically limit God except by means of God. And, on the other hand, the finite has an internal and active relation to the infinite. The truly infinite value of morality, for example, no one would deny. For all that, it is evident that the moral may show itself in finite and individual acts, occurring in time and space. But if the meaning is that we can have no apprehension of the infinite in general, neither of infinite being nor of infinite space and time, because we can never reach the end or the limit of these things, that is to confuse intuition or mental representation with thought. We cannot bring those things into an intuition otherwise than symbolically, but we can think them very well, and think them as positive ideas, and not simply, as Hamilton would have it, as negative ideas. Add to this, that extensive infinity, which cannot be the material of intuition, is to be distinguished from intensive infinity, upon which stress is placed, first of all, in respect to the divine idea, and from which extensive infinity is derived; intensive infinity can be thought well enough."

<sup>1</sup> II. 16.

merely in reference to the Person of Christ or the Christian salvation, but also, generally, in reference to the Christian consciousness of God. If immediate or religious certainty is sufficient for this need, it is also sufficient for the whole contents of faith.

3. The question as to the *Relativity* of our knowledge leads to the frequently handled question, whether there is *an absolute knowledge of God*? Here, also, the *form* of the knowledge in question must be distinguished from its contents. *Formally* regarded, our knowledge cannot be absolute; as genuine knowledge it is human and progressive. At no point of the earthly development is complete clearness granted, or the perfect sounding of the deeps of God. Man's knowledge of God is never comparable in clearness or assurance with God's knowledge of Himself; still less is the former identical with the latter. As regards the *contents* of our knowledge, it, indeed, also happens that the contents of one given element of our knowledge are not equal to the infinitely rich divine contents. Thus, in both aspects, our knowledge of God is relative and not absolute. Still the relative is not, therefore, untrue. There is a grasp of the absolute divine Essence in thought, if there is not an absolute grasp. There is a true grasp of God by man, because and in so far as there is a true grasp of man by God, who reveals Himself and communicates Himself to human receptivity (§§ 4, 12); and in so far as this thought of God corresponds with objective truth, there exists a knowledge adequate and just. Such a knowledge is to be maintained in this sense, that our progressive knowledge surely and not seemingly advances, and objective truth attaches to it at every stage. But there also belongs to an increasing and true apprehension of God, an increasing apprehension of the unfathomableness of the deeps of God. Insight of such a kind is not possible through an ignorance of God, but only through a knowledge of Him. God is an inexhaustible spring, and His infinite Power of creation, His Wisdom, and His Love, are not drained by the countlessness of their works. That fact is at once humbling and elevating. What greatness would it be to be allied to a Being who was as transparent as the proposition, once one is one? Eunomius regarded the Deity as such a lifeless Unity or Monad, when he thought

he knew God as God knew Himself. But every personality has in itself a depth, an infinitude, a potentiality, which others do not possess, and but imperfectly know. God is a sea; the more we draw from Him, the more we apprehend or surmise unfathomed depths. Increasing vision is also an increasing glance into His depths, which have no existence to the dull sense. Every recourse to the well of God slakes the thirst; every draught arouses thirst after fuller appropriation. Therefore the Church has maintained against Eunomius the divine Incognizability, *i.e.* the divine Unfathomableness, and against Arius the divine Cognizability by virtue of the revelation through the Son. The Scriptures teach that humanity has in Christ a true knowledge of God, and Christ has His knowledge also for our sakes.<sup>1</sup> The true apprehension of God we only have through the true presence of truth in and for us, *i.e.* in communion with God; therefore πιστεῖν καὶ γινώσκειν so often appear together. Further, although the mystery hidden from the earlier ages is disclosed in Christianity,<sup>2</sup> it is still true that our knowledge is only piecework,<sup>3</sup> and a shadow, though its lineaments are the outlines of truth. On the other hand, the higher stage of knowledge is a seeing for the first time face to face,<sup>4</sup> and no longer in a dark mirror. Then only shall we know, as we are known of God.<sup>5</sup>

§ 17.—*Survey of the Proofs for the Existence of God.*

The various attempts to prove the existence of God are to be divided into those which advance from the idea of God to the existence of the idea, and into those which rise from finite being to the being and idea of God. The latter empirical method is either of a historic kind, or is derived from the world of nature, or from the essence of spirit.

*Observation.*—In our paragraph, we only reject the irrelevant element attaching especially to the so-called historical

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 27, etc.; John xvii. 3, comp. John i. 18; 1 Cor. i. 5, ii. 10-12; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Eph. i. 3, iii. 4-9.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iii. 9; 1 John ii. 20, 27.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Comp. on the importance attached by Scripture to knowledge, §§ 12, 13.

and psychological proofs of the divine existence. That portion of the empirical proofs, which is actually applicable, will be more suitably interwoven in the course of the proof itself.

1. The proposition "God is," or "God exists," contains two parts which are to be united. An attempt may be made to bridge the interval between the idea of God and His existence, and that is the notion of the *Ontological* argument; or existence may be the starting-point, not the bare *idea* of existence or the idea of God, but the world of existence, according to the inference—if anything exists, God must. To this second series belong the proofs which seek to rise to God from the finite generally, or from a definite state of the finite—from the world of nature or of spirit.

2. Besides these proofs, a desire has been shown to frame so-called *Historical* proofs for the divine existence. First, the *argumentum a consensu gentium*. No man or people, it is said, is wholly without religion; the most savage nations have their divinities. Such universality is supposed to be proof that the divine idea belongs to the nature of man. But the perfect inductive proof of this assertion is not furnished for the past, and the unattainable future of humanity, as far as we are concerned, should be considered. There are even races without a trace of a cultus. And just as stages of savagery are conceivable, in which the consciousness of God has not yet arisen, so there may also be a false culture, in which the consciousness of God is suppressed, for a while at least, by secularization. These proofs can only settle whether it can be asserted to be the lot of all reasoning beings as such to have the idea of God; they cannot prove whether all have fulfilled this destiny.

Out of miracles, revelation, and the Scriptures, some have wished to construct the so-called *Theological* proof, confounding methods of suggestion with methods of proof. Miracles and Holy Writ can only be regarded as the work of God, if we already possess from other sources the knowledge that God is. He who would prove the existence of God from the Scriptures, treats the Bible as an authority of itself and apart from God; and he who would arrive at the divine existence by means of historically authenticated miracles, presupposes the world to be an independent and inwardly certain

power possessing its own laws apart from God, in order to reach God by means of the contradiction to this fixed order visible in miracle. But that order does not for a moment exist apart from God, the traversing of which by miracle is supposed to prove the divine existence.

The *Psychological* deduction, at present much esteemed, promises to lead farther. That deduction maintains that the idea of God belongs to the constituent elements of the reasoning organism, as empirical investigation finds it. The idea of God is to be regarded by us, as we are constituted, as a fundamental truth, an axiom; it makes itself appreciated as an immediate and higher certainty. That we do not deny; but the proof, not the assertion, can alone suffice of the fact that the spirit, as a reasoning spirit, carries within itself the necessity of thinking of God as existing; and of the fact that it can only be a crude or mutilated reason which does not yet possess this faith, or possesses it no longer. The supposition of an innate idea of God, which appears in many forms, allows the authentication to be missed of the fact that, and how, this idea is indissolubly associated with the nature of man. It is satisfied with an external implantation of that idea, which may now lie more or less at hand in the spirit side by side with other ideas; whilst that crudity and that over-refinement previously mentioned may be cited as instances to the contrary. Thus the psychological proof, if it seeks scientific form, and divests itself of the adventitious, leads to the ontological proof, the ultimate aim of which is to show that the idea of God is essential to the reason as such.

§ 18.—*The Ontological Moment in the Proof for the Existence of God.*

LITERATURE.—Anselm, *Monologium* and *Proslogium*, capp. 2, 3; *Liber Apologet.* Ritter, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, vol. iii. pp. 49, etc. Cartesius, *Meditationes de prima philos.* 1670, Medit. 3, 5. Spinoza, *Ethics*, books i.–v. Mendelssohn, *Morgenstunden*, Berlin 1785. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes*, vol. ii. as appendix to *Philosophie der Religion*. Hasse, *Anselm von Canterbury*, ii pp. 233–286. Biedermann, pp. 569–576, etc., 621. Pfeiderer, *Relig. Philo-*

*sophie*, 1878, pp. 402, etc., gives a good criticism of Kant's criticism of the Ontological argument.

Little adequate as the Ontological argument is in its customary form, and certainly as it refuses the task, if it is expected to establish the complete and full idea of God, it is still possible to give that argument a form, which substantiates to rational thought Absoluteness and necessary Self-origination as *stamina* of the idea of God. Everything depends upon a double demonstration, viz. :—

That existence must be thought of as essentially inhering in the *idea* of the Absolute ; and,

That this idea of the Absolute is not accidental, but *necessary* to rational thought.

1. The heathen nations have formed no conception of the Ontological proof, if a few traces be excepted to be found in the philosophers, Plato, Kleanthes the Stoic, and Diogenes of Laerta. The reason is that, God remaining concealed from them more or less, His Being and His idea did not as yet coincide. In heathendom the gods *grow*, or they exchange their jurisdiction ; therein the acknowledgment is made that the idea of God still has something contingent about it, and therefore that the being of its gods is not already included in the idea of them. They have a being which does not correspond with the idea of God, and their idea of the divine does not embrace as yet absolute and necessary being. But the Hebrew religion also has a God, who still reserves His perfect revelation, and therefore the communication of His perfect idea. "Jehovah" may, it is true, appear to comprehend the Ontological thought,—“I am that I am” (Being is given with my idea). But if the eternal Self-identity, which constitutes the original meaning of the word, also essentially embraces the identity of the Being and the idea of God, still that side of the fact is not imaged in the Old Testament. The meaning, “The divine Self-identity in the flux of the finite” comes nearer ;—“He is now as in the future, and in the future as now.” The translation is arbitrary, “I shall be He,” i.e. I shall reveal myself as Him I am. That being is included in the idea of God, cannot be really acknowledged, unless God

is acknowledged to be necessarily self-originating. But this presupposes a distinction between God and God, which is still generally wanting in the Hebrew religion. The Ontological argument only came with full force into consciousness in the Christian era, in that religion which professes to introduce the perfect revelation of God, and thus His true idea. That argument has moved through three forms or stages. The first form is that of Anselm, which first presented a clear outline of this proof; the second is that of Cartesius and Spinoza; the third is the modern, from the days of Kant onwards, the perfect form of which has still to be elaborated. Anselm has accurately conceived the thought of the Ontological argument, when he asserted that being is inseparable from *such a thought*. But he has neither verified the assertion satisfactorily, nor has he shown that the thought of God must necessarily be entertained. This point Spinoza (and partly Cartesius) was the first and Kant the second to show.

I. THE ANSELMIC FORM.—According to the *Monologium*, we arrive at the mental representation of God by the agency of faith and conscience, therefore by a combined religious and moral method; by the same means we arrive at the representation of the relativity of the world. But as there seemed to Anselm something inadequate in making the Being of the Absolute dependent upon the existence of the Relative, as if the latter were more certain than the former, he has interpolated in the *Proslogium* (*Alloquium Dei*) the Ontological method. The thought of God, which is always given, and the being of which is to be proved, claims, at any rate, to be the highest thought possible; indeed, upon close comparison with all other thoughts which come and go, with thoughts of such things as may just as well not exist as exist, it has the essential peculiarity, the prerogative, so to speak,—and this is Anselm's discovery,—that, if it is actually thought of as the highest conceivable thought, it is also thought of as existent. Were it not thought of as being, it would not for a moment be actually thought. Anselm then proceeds with his proof as follows:<sup>1</sup>—"We believe Thou art something, beyond which nothing greater can be thought. The fool (Ps. xiv.) denies the existence of such a Being. Is He therefore non-existent?

<sup>1</sup> *Proslog.* cap. II. 3; *Lib. apolog. adv. respond. pro Insep.* capp. ii. iv.



But the very fool hears and understands what I say, 'something, greater than which there is nothing,' and what he understands is in his understanding. That it also exists without him would thus have to be proved. But that, beyond which nothing greater can be thought, cannot exist in mere intellect. For did it exist only in intellect, the thought might be framed that it was realized, and that would be a greater thought. Consequently, were that, a greater than which cannot be thought, existent in mere intellect, the thought *quo majus cogitari non potest* would at the same time be *quo majus cogitari potest*, which is impossible. Consequently, there exists, in reality as well as in the understanding, something a greater than which cannot be thought. And this is so true that its non-existence cannot be thought. Something may be thought which is only to be thought as existent, and that is a *majus* than that the non-existence of which may be thought, and that Thou art, O Lord, my God, I must think though I did not believe." The nerve of the Anselmic argument lies therefore in the notion that an idea which has an objective existence is a *majus* than that to which mere subjective existence appertains; that, consequently, as under the idea of God the highest thought possible is at any rate expressed, the idea of God is not thought unless it is thought as existent. For, he says in another place,<sup>1</sup> it may be thought of everything that it does not exist, with the exception of that *quod summe est* to which being pre-eminently belongs. That is, the non-existence may be thought of everything which has beginning or end, or which is constituted of parts and is nowhere whole. But that, and it alone, cannot be thought as non-existent which has neither beginning nor end, and is not constituted of parts, but is thought of as everywhere existing whole. Gaunilo,<sup>2</sup> Count of Montigny, makes a twofold answer in defence of the atheist. He says that that highest essence has no being in the understanding; it only exists therein by the ear, not by being; it only exists as a man who has heard a sound endeavours to embrace a thing wholly unknown to him in an image. And therein, he says, it is concluded that the mental representation of God in mankind is already

<sup>1</sup> *Apolog.* cap. IV.

<sup>2</sup> Author of a work, *Pro Insipientia*.

a purely contingent one, and is produced from without by the sound of words; its necessary presence in the spirit is not proved. Thus, he adds, much is wanting to the ability of inferring its existence from the finding of such an image in the spirit. In the sphere of mere imagination no one thing has a less or a greater existence than any other thing; each has equally no existence at all. Therefore, he writes, granted that the presence of the idea of God in the spirit is not contingent, still the thought or the concept of God does not essentially argue the being of God. Similarly says Kant later on: "We are no richer if we think of our ability as one cipher more." That Anselm also undoubtedly knew, but he opined that the concept of God is different to any other thought, which remains unaltered, whether it is thought of as existent or non-existent; the concept of God is that thought, which is no longer thought unless it is thought as existent, and which, therefore, essentially involves being. But, of course, it is insufficiently established by Anselm that a concept of God which does not necessarily include existence, is not the highest thought, and therefore is not the concept of God, and that, consequently, the really highest thought must also be thought of as existent. To this the following objection attaches. Inasmuch as Anselm treated existence as a *majus* compared with non-existence, he treated existence as an attribute, whereas it is the bearer of all attributes.<sup>1</sup> So it is not proved by Anselm that the origin of this idea, which, when thought, is thought as existent, is not contingent to the reason, but necessary; and that reason only remains reason by virtue of this idea. Finally, Anselm thinks, thus overrating the Ontological moment, that he has already attained therein the full concept of God. These shortcomings were to be obviated, stage by stage, by his successors.

II. CARTESIUS AND SPINOZA.—The former adduces the true proposition, which needs, however, preliminary proof, that all other ideas carry in them possibility only and contingency; but the idea of God, as of the most real of all beings, carries

<sup>1</sup> In the *Monologium* the proposition certainly occurs that the finite is only thought if it is thought as not self-existent; the Infinite, or God only, if thought as self-existent. He also showed that contingent being is connected with imperfection.

also in itself its *necessaria et æterna existentia*. And existence is as necessarily associated with this idea as it happens that he, who apprehends that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, is perfectly convinced that it must be so. Only prejudices, he thinks, hinder belief in this proof. In everything else, to wit, we distinguish between the idea and its existence. Inasmuch as we do arbitrarily form ideas which have no existence, we doubt whether the idea of God is not also a *fictitious* and self-made idea. He then endeavours to show that the idea of God must rather be innate, for it is neither *adventicia*,—it cannot possibly come solely from without, for God is not represented by the senses,—nor is it *facticiu*, formed by abstraction, for by abstraction from the finite we can only arrive at a non-finite; but the idea of God is not merely of a negative kind, but contains infinity in itself in a positive manner. It must consequently be innate. And seeing that it includes the thought of the infinite, it must be the effect of an infinite cause, even of that which is thought in the innate idea. And the doubt as to whether our idea of God actually answers to God falls to the ground, because God is to be thought as the most real of all beings, and as such veracious, and unable to implant an untrue idea of Himself. By such reasoning some negative or apagogic aid is rendered to the proof that we do not arrive contingently at the thought of the Absolute; but nothing more. Granting that the idea of God lies ready-made and innate within us, we might, it is true, be compelled to think it, but *the* apprehension would still be absent of the fact that the thought of the divine existence necessarily inhered in the thought of God. Kant's objection to Cartesius is, of course, too sweeping. When he says, in opposition to Cartesius: "That the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles is, of course, necessary, but only hypothetically,—upon the existence of the triangle," the objection is not just. Supposing a triangle were nowhere to be found, the conclusion would still hold that when thought it must be so thought. *But* it is to be conceded that Cartesius has not proved that existence is just as inherent in the thought of God as that relation of the angles is in the thought of a triangle. On the other hand, in reference to this *second point*, namely, that existence is to be

thought as necessarily associated with the concept of God, Spinoza leads us a step farther. The highest concept he designates Substance. To the *natura* (to the essence or idea) of this Substance *existere* belongs (L. I. Prop. 7). For it must be thought of as *causa sui*. It would not be the highest concept if it *produceretur ab alio*, if it *conceptu alterius rei indigeret*, *a quo formari debeat* (Def. 3, 1). It is *conceptus* of that *quod in se est et per se concipitur*, or of that whose *essentia necessario involvit existentiam*. But such a conception includes this, that the highest Essence is to be thought of not as conditioned or dependent, but as *unconditioned*. Substance is therefore only thought when it is thought as *causa sui*, and consequently as existing. Finite things already have a potentiality of existence, the *posse existere*; but it is part of the concept of Substance that it is not merely *able* to exist, which might always, nevertheless, include a dependence upon something else, but that it necessarily exists, not by the agency of another, but of itself as *causa sui*, by which he understands, negatively, existing *non ab alio*; positively, existing of itself, *sponte, ultro, a se*. Since God, therefore, in order to be thought, is thought as self-existent and not as existent by another, He is either not really thought at all, or He is thought as being; in which case yet another question remains, whether the thought of an unconditioned essence, in the concept of which being necessarily inheres, is an arbitrary thought or one rationally necessary. But though it is unsatisfactory for Spinoza to degrade the *causa sui* (a concept which he obtained from Christian Scholasticism) to mere *sponte* or *ultro esse*, he has, nevertheless, apprehended that necessary existence is to be attributed to the supreme concept, because a thing which is derived from another thing cannot be called the highest concept, whilst a concept is quite conceivable in which existence *per se* dwells as an essential feature. The inference of existence from the concept, which Spinoza reaches by his *causa sui*, Mos. Mendelssohn in his *Morgenstunden* endeavours thus to gain:—"That which can be thought apart from reality is circumscribed and dependent upon myself first of all, inasmuch as it only has existence in me, as a modification of my thought. That which relies upon another only, and is not of itself, is contingent because dependent. But I have

either not thought God at all, or I have to think Him as independent. Therefore when thought He is thought as the non-contingent, but as the self-existent unconditioned and self-dependent essence." The first demand which was to be made of the Anselmic proof is thus generally satisfied. God is only thought if He is thought as existing; existence necessarily inheres in this *idea*. But if He is not an idea of a contingent Being, the question is still to be raised whether He is not a contingent idea, whether it is *necessary* to think the idea of God, which, if thought, is necessarily thought as a self-existent essence. Upon that point Cartesius had only given a mere negative, apagogic reply.

III. KANT.<sup>1</sup>—Everything now depended on the question: Is the formation of the concept "God" contingent or necessary? That idea was presupposed by Anselm as simply given, and was treated by Cartesius as *idea innata*.

Kant enters profoundly into the question, and endeavours to show that the idea of God follows from the very nature of the reason; it is not contingently conceived, but is an idea indispensable to every intelligent consideration of things. By means of the idea of God, to which the reason advances involuntarily, because it is the abstract of all realities, the rule of its action is prescribed for the understanding. That rational idea is, he says, *regulative* for the theoretic reason, the ultimate law of the movement which must strive after the unity of what is thought. All perfection must be thought as compatible in the highest concept—in the regulative idea of the reason. That is a pledge of the possibility of a knowledge free from contradiction altogether. He is far from ascribing existence to it. But although Kant also grants that the reason cannot dispense with this idea, and thus one may speak of God as the ideal of the reason, it is a problematic, not a constituent concept. "Existence is not to be clawed out of the concept" in his opinion, and he rejects the Ontological argument of Cartesius,<sup>2</sup> to the basis of which he certainly does not get. This he grants, that the idea of God as of the unity of perfections (realities) must guide our thought, as the director of all

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schelling, *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie*, pp. 270, etc., and Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, edit. Rosenkranz, III. 501, 620.

action of the reason in pursuit of unity and coherence, if that action would not be idle, vain, and aimless. Those realities, according to Kant, are by an internal necessity of the reason combined into a unity,—are, so to speak, hypostasized (and personified in addition) into the so-called ideal of the reason, into an image of thought, which we call God.<sup>1</sup> But we have theoretically no right, he thinks, to attribute an existence to the ideal, though we may treat it as existent, because we hypostasize it. We must, of course, so connect empirical things as if they were ordered by a supreme and sole Intelligence. But it is questionable whether all realities thought in their perfection can coalesce in one real object—God.<sup>2</sup> Mendelssohn had already canvassed, according to the method of Leibnitz and Wolff,<sup>3</sup> the possibility of the idea of God from the point of view, whether the perfections attaching to the concept of God could also be actually united in one Being. He had replied that a contradiction could only arise if one perfection denied what another affirmed. But seeing that all perfections in God are affirmations, they cannot contradict each other, and the concept of God is therefore possible. (Whence, indeed, had Mendelssohn knowledge of the divine attributes? He had simply accepted them empirically from popular thought.) Kant is not therefore content with this proof. In the reason, those perfections, he thinks, do not circumscribe each other, because they have no proper existence in the reason. Therefore a real subject might be unable, be too narrow, so to speak, to unite all within itself. The thought of God as comprising the perfections might be subjectively possible, actual, and even necessary, without the objective existence of God notwithstanding. But if Kant concedes the presence of the regulative ideas in thought, and of what they comprise, to be possible, actual, and necessary, because otherwise rational thought would be impossible, he must also concede that these regulative ideas, as they exist in the spirit, do not of themselves, or really, contradict or exclude each other, but are in consonance (as he himself also says that positive propositions do not contradict each other); other-

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, pp. 599, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 608, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Morgenstunden*, 1786, Vorles. p. 17.

wise the reason would be essentially at variance with itself, and as little trust could be placed in its doubts as in its affirmations. Further, if these ideas have a subjective existence in the one reason that thinks them, and if their plurality does not explode their unity, there is an actual coalescence of them as a matter of fact; and it is not evident how they could suddenly contradict each other, if, being subjectively thought without contradiction, they became objective. Were such a contradiction to arise, the World of Existence would be in essential opposition to the World of Idea—a Dualism, which would make an end of all knowledge.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, this actuality of the idea of God in the spirit, in which it already shows itself as a regulative idea, also proves that the idea is not a mere unsubstantial sound, *ens rationis ratiocinantis*,<sup>2</sup> but the ruling power in rational thought, essentially incorporate in its organism.<sup>3</sup> The function of rational thought being impossible without it, it does not first originate in thought, but is rather presupposed in thought as the condition of all rational movement; and the idea of God appears to the man who acknowledges this, a power independent of subjective thought, bringing that thought to a rational condition, and imparting to it its own unity. Kant's objections against the objective reality of that which is necessary to the thinker, coincide with the subjective and sceptical character of his system generally.

Whilst, therefore, it was recognised before Kant that existence attached *per se* to the idea of the highest cognizable Essence, but not that this idea itself is necessary and involuntary, Kant shows that the formation of the idea of the highest essence is necessary to our reason, but thinks that a knowledge of the existence of this idea is not at the same time given. Although, therefore, the idea of God is not an idea of a contingent, but of a necessarily self-existent Essence,—indeed, although the thought of this essence is not volitional or contingent, but rationally necessary,—it does not, notwith-

<sup>1</sup> That would lead to absolute scepticism.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 519.

<sup>3</sup> That idea, he says himself, is a formula necessary to the unity of rational apprehension, and it is a necessary maxim of the reason to proceed in accordance with that idea, pp. 520, 521. That idea constitutes the possibility of everything else we think, p. 453.

standing, follow, in his esteem, that this idea has a real existence; it only follows that we must think it; but its existence does not follow from the fact that we think it, and must think it as existent. But what more can be desired of a proof than that we, in order to think rationally, must think a thing necessarily (in this case an ultimate essence), which, when thought, is thought as existent, namely, as self-existent? If this thought of the highest existent essence is a thought rationally necessary, a rational thought is not possible in addition and at the same time which states the opposite, and either asserts that the thought of the highest essence generally is no necessary thought, or that, though necessary, it is not necessarily a thought of something existing. A scepticism which concedes that the thought of God is a thought of an existent thing and a necessary thought, but nevertheless thinks that it does not therefore follow that there is an existent highest essence, must at the same time give utterance to the contradiction that the thought which is necessary for the rational thinker is not necessary. For only by non-thought could it assert non-necessity. We say, on the contrary, that the proof is for rational, and not for hesitant thought. The rational necessity of a proof being demonstrated, there is no room for an intermittence or denial (of the truth) of this thought.<sup>1</sup> If that is not to be regarded as true and certain which we must think, no knowledge at all is possible, not even mathematical knowledge; we must sceptically despair of the cognizability of truth generally. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, on the other hand, rightly adhere to the morally-established confidence that some knowledge is possible, and that what we must necessarily think as existent does exist, it being impossible to have any further desire for knowledge than that it should be something necessarily thought.

<sup>1</sup> Harm's criticism upon this point is very good, *Philos. seit Kant*, pp. 186, 214, etc. Pfeiderer has also joined him against the new and uncritical worship of Kant, *Relig. Phil.* 1878, pp. 19-21. On p. 21 he rightly says: "If Kant thinks that even rationally necessary ideas need not on this account be regarded as objectively true, this opinion is the basis of the purest scepticism in the theoretic sphere. But Kant himself denies this altogether immediately he treats of practical Truth; then, what is necessary to thought according to the reason, is objective truth without more ado, and, indeed, possesses transcendental and absolute validity."



Schelling, and especially Hegel, have again restored to honour the thought of the Ontological argument condemned in the Kantian time. Hegel, indeed, is not merely certain of the consonance between thought which is essentially necessary and objective existence, but he transforms the consonance into an identity—an exaggeration which has again diminished the confidence in the Ontological argument, which belonged to it when truly apprehended. Hegel places the Ontological argument at the end of all the arguments for the existence of God, and treats all other arguments merely as untrue forms of the Ontological, which therefore has of itself to establish the whole true concept of God.<sup>1</sup> In his esteem, the aim and result of the Ontological argument is to show that the Absolute is truth, or the essence of our being and thought, the basis from which our consciousness ascends. In the Ontological argument the spirit comprehends itself in its absolute being as absolute thought, that is at the same time existence. Thus he applies the Ontological argument in the interests of a pantheistic (panlogistic) mode of thought. We shall of course see that the Ontological argument does not suffice to establish God as an absolute Essence different to ourselves, or as absolute Personality. It cannot secure the complete concept of God. On the other hand, that argument does not prove the Pantheistic thesis even in its Hegelian form, but it goes so far as to show the necessity that an unconditioned absolute essence is to be thought as existent. Whether this absolute essence is our own being or the being of the world, or some being different from the world and self-existent, remains undecided, and can only be shown by a further course of proof.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Even Biedermann and Pfeiderer place the Ontological argument at the end, but would still preserve in that argument what is true in the other proofs. We shall see that those proofs are only able to effect something if the Ontological moment is established, and therefore that the Ontological moment should precede. Considered phenomenologically, they indicate the manner in which thought arrives at the idea of God. But in this work we leave the phenomenological out of sight.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Biedermann, *Christl. Dogmatik*, pp. 574, etc., upon the insufficiency of the Ontological proof of itself for the establishment of the true concept of God. But he regards the core of that proof to be, that it advances from the being of finite spirit to the being of absolute spirit as its basis. But that is to confound it with the Cosmological argument which advances to causality, or as Hegel would do, to verify, by the Ontological argument, an identity between

Schelling<sup>1</sup> retires upon the statement that the science of reason shows God to be the *natura necessaria*, to be that which is *actu* existent according to its nature (*essentia*) or its concept, and which is not merely possible. God is, it is true, when we so think Him, still enclosed in the reason, that is, we simply have a subjectively thought existence of God; but He is so enclosed in the reason that the reason must apprehend Him as not essentially so enclosed, *i.e.* it must postulate Him as actually existing. Its result is a longing after revelation, because mankind would otherwise remain a wreck unless God approve Himself as existing, as one who must be thought by the reason. Schleiermacher and Heinrich Ritter have also similarly recognized and developed the core of the Ontological argument,—the former in his *Dialektik* and in the Introduction to the *Philosophische Ethik*, where the idea of the existent God is proved to be necessary, because the condition of knowledge generally is given therein.<sup>2</sup>

2. After the historical inquiry, we now come to the thetic exposition of the Ontological moment in the proof for the existence of God. To make what is proven in our inquiry complete, we give to it the following form:—

A. When the highest Essence is thought, it is thought as unconditioned and independent of anything else, independent also of our subjective thought, but as unconditioned or absolute, self-existing, and consequently as existent. Thus the only *choice* lies between leaving the idea of God unthought, or thinking it, when thought, absolute and self-existing.

B. But this double possibility does not hold, and thus the hypothetical alternative is rather established. It is not optional, but necessary to think an Absolute, which, in order to be thought, is to be thought as existent. It is necessary, that is to say, for him who wishes to think rationally, and whose thought *is thought* which would become knowledge, which desire we acknowledged to be an ethical demand of

finite and absolute spirit. The latter process Pfleiderer rightly condemns, pp. 402, 408, who himself relies more upon the law of causality. Even Sengler, *Die Idee Gottes*, 1845, I. pp. 48–55, rightly blames forms of the argument which by its aid would prove too much.

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie der Mythologie*, p. 582, pp. 283, etc., p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. *Dialektik*, § 71; H. Ritter, *Encyclopädie*, pp. 353, 439.

thought (§ 9).<sup>1</sup> It is not open, therefore, we say, to the rational thinker to avow an Absolute or not—he *must* avow it. The Absolute so coincides with the roots of rational thought, with its possibility, that without it that which is one's own mentality (*die eigene Geistigkeit*) must cease. It is already manifest generally, that without the Absolute there is no longer anything infinite for men, and also an absence of knowledge of the finite as such; for apart from opposition to the infinite, even the finite as such cannot be known. Thus understanding at most might remain, but not reason. But yet, further, without the Absolute, as Kant has rightly seen, the point of unity is lost for all plurality of the existent and the possible. A consciousness which has got rid of the thought of absolute Being would become a prey to an endless Atomism and dissolution. The reason *must* by its nature seek unity, must maintain an ultimate principle of unity of the ideal and real for thought and existence; otherwise there would neither be rational thought nor volition. Without this principle of unity, thought falls to pieces. Even the copula between subject and predicate, that last relic of the ultimate principle of unity, would be consistently dissolved, and with it thought would also be extinguished. Of course doubt would also be extinguished, but reason with it; and doubt, so long as it makes any assertion, can only exist by the presupposition which it denies. We regard this necessity of the thought of absolute Being as the ultimate unity in relation to *thought* and *existence*, to the world of *volition* and to *knowledge*.

*Thought* is truly human—*i.e.* not visionary or sportive thought, but thought which would become knowledge (§§ 4, 12, 13)—by the presupposition of an Absolute as the prototype (*Urform*) of thought.<sup>2</sup> Thought is what it should be only by the laws of thought, which form its regulative element and internal law, which thought has not first produced, but which constitute the immovable foundation, the absolute fortress and a power innate in the thinker. Thus the Absolute

<sup>1</sup> Quite so Ritter: "All that is immediately certain to Philosophy is that we desire to know. But in that fact lies the idea of perfection, of unconditioned truth. He who seeks truth must presuppose the existence of truth," p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Schleiermacher, *Dialektik*, §§ 135, 165, 216.

as the logical power precedes all actual thought, and is not produced by thought; or, the Absolute is the primary logical element, the *original possibility of logical thought* to be presupposed as existent. But it is no less also the *original possibility of existence*, of all realization according to form and matter. If an actual being is to be (and the thinker is already an actual being), its possibility is presupposed, whether that possibility is absolutely within itself or without. In the latter state it cannot remain; it impels towards an existence which has its possibility within itself. But that being which bears its possibility within itself, and which is thereby the possibility of all being, is called the Absolute. But if the existence of the Absolute is to be thought as the original possibility of all being, the world of volition, which has to do with the real, also presupposes the Absolute as its original possibility.

C. Finally, the Absolute must be thought, because the possibility of *knowledge* must be thought. Knowledge is the unity (not the identity) of thought and being. Were, then, this unity and harmony of being and thought generally and originally nowhere given (therefore also not once present) in a common primary basis of both, which is the real point of unity for the *cognoscens* and the *cognoscibile*, this harmony of both could not *gain a place (werden)* in us. Therefore this absolute harmony must be originally given, and be presupposed, as truth. The ideal and real must be originally united in themselves somewhere and somehow, in order for the union of the two to exist in us, in our knowledge. If we call this unity of thought and being to be presupposed the Absolute, the Absolute is therefore the original possibility of all our *knowledge*, inasmuch as it is the self-existent unity in which they harmonize, or inasmuch as it is original truth.

The Absolute is therefore necessary as the original possibility of thought and being, of volition and knowledge; and it is true not as a bare possibility, but as the real potentiality for all actual thought, being, volition, and knowledge. Consequently we might say as follows: For thought (which wishes to become knowledge, and which wish cannot morally be omitted), the thought of God as the real original possibility in every relation, is not optional, but is so necessary, that with its

exclusion, the possibility of thought, being, volition, and knowledge would also be excluded. Rational thought is thus necessitated to think the Absolute, and indeed as real. In that fact a further one is included; we can only think the Absolute, indeed we only think rationally at all, by virtue of that original absolute possibility, or by virtue of the Deity.

The mental representation of the highest Essence, from which we started empirically, proved itself to us as a thought of something to which existence belonged essentially, and not contingently; but further also as a thought, which was not merely given from without, or contingently or arbitrarily thought, but which rather possessed a necessity, implanted in thought as rational; so that thought according to its nature necessarily has a turn for producing the thought of the Absolute. But this thought of the necessarily existent has finally received its absolute basis, namely, by means of the knowledge of its absolute basis in the Absolute itself, as the real possibility of our thought of God. If we do not renounce reason, as we may not, but think according to internal necessity, we also know the foundation of that constitution of our being, according to which we necessarily think an absolute Being. We have not originated that necessity. It is a precedent power over our thought, but of such a kind that it leads us to the existence of that which this necessity to think it also verifies as absolute Being, and thus our necessary and rational thought is based in God as in the Absolute. We think God through God; with our actual thought of Him He proves Himself as actually existing. Thus the Ontological argument ends, inasmuch as the empirical thought of God, from which we started, so far as the thought of the absolute Being is contained in it, has also found the authentication of its ultimate origin. The absolute Being is such as not merely verifies and supports itself, but also the thought of itself, and thus scientific thought turns its face with internal necessity towards *Revelation*, and confesses with religious feeling, "In Thy light we see light" (Ps. xxxvi. 10, xlix. 20). Thought which proceeds rationally, and advances according to internal necessity, comes to an issue with the living relation between God and man, upon which religion lives. But we have certainly not treated strictly in our argument the full

idea of that which we call God, but only the Godhead as the Absolute Being, which is to be thought as necessary and as existent, if thought, being, volition, and knowledge are to be.

### § 19.—*Consequences.*

Thought giving a necessarily existent absolute Being or Godhead, from that Absoluteness the predicates are immediately derivable of Unity, Solity,<sup>1</sup> and Simplicity, as well as of Infinity. *Unity* neither signifies, that, because all being is originally included in the Godhead as the primary possibility, there cannot exist any being side by side, as acosmistic Pantheism has it, nor that among existences God takes the highest place by a mere contingency, and thus only is One; but it expresses that according to His Essence Deity can only be One, since His Unity is at the same time Solity. The Solity of His necessary and absolute Being on the one hand elevates Him qualitatively and specifically above all other being, and on the other hand also calls for a solitary position relatively to all being without Him. Further, as His *Simplicity* cannot be opposed to difference in Him, but partly presupposes and partly corroborates it, so His *Infinity* also is to be thought as no mere negative, but as positive; therefore, should a world exist, to be thought positively as *Freedom from Space and Time* (*Raum- und Zeitfreiheit*).

1. That the absolute Being is one, follows immediately from the fact that it is the primary real possibility of everything. By that inference all Dualism at the ultimate sources is excluded. But it is frequently imagined that the Unity of God is a concept immediately clear and precise, one and the same with the monotheistic thesis which has become so epoch-

<sup>1</sup> [*Einheit, Einzigkeit, und Einfachheit.* For *Einzigkeit* there is no equivalent in English quite unexceptionable. *Aloneness* is scarcely eligible, and *Solitude, Solitariness, Singularity*, arouse disturbing associations. The idea is, Deity as *solus*, and a word has been coined on the analogy of *Unity*.—TR.]

making in the history of religion ; therefore, also, the concept of the Unity of God is not wont to be intimately treated. Schelling<sup>1</sup> has rightly remarked upon the Unity, that it is not so easy and self-evident. It needs, to be thought with clearness, a cautious handling upon two sides. *Firstly*, By the idea of the necessarily existent absolute Being, the statement is only made that the Godhead is originally in itself the Unity and the Abstract of being. But this Unity or this Monotheism might also be taken thus: that what is, is God, that only the Godhead exists; and in that way we should not transcend Pantheism. We should stand in the very midst of it,—namely, in its acosmistic form,—if the way were thereby cut off to further definitions, by which existence is also conceded to any being besides God. If it is meant that the Godhead alone is absolutely all being, either *actu* or potentially,—that is, germinally,<sup>2</sup>—it would certainly be a mere tautology to speak of the Unity of this Totality of Being = God ; and there could at most be conceived the distinction between parts and whole (the world or the *universum*, as a unity and integer, would be called God, the existent as divided would be called world), a conception which would likewise not transcend Pantheism. But so little does that view resemble the peculiar Monotheism which has been epoch-making in the history of religion, that even polytheistic religions might allow such a doctrine of Unity and a Monotheism, which does not mean more by the Unity of an absolute Being than a Being which is not represented as self-conscious, but only as the totality of being or the totality of force (*Allkraft*), which lives and ramifies in everything. The *religious interest*, so much we may say here, is not content that God alone is Being proper, although ancient Christian teachers—not to mention the Mystics, an Anselm and a Thomas—so express themselves, and only know how to distinguish the world from God by the negation of the being which belongs to it, describing the world as a limited and God as an unlimited Being, and thus only quantitatively distinguishing God and the world. It is part of religion that man, the creature, should also be a being, and distinct from God,

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Vorles. 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> As in von Hartmann's *Philosophie des Unbewussten*, 5th edit. 1873, pp. 515, etc.

indeed, otherwise than as part from whole.<sup>1</sup> The Being of God must be of another kind than the creaturely, as those church-teachers *think* who say that God is *id quod summe est*. How we arrive at an actual being of a world, without prejudice to the Absoluteness and Unity of God, can only be made clear later. But although we have only to do here with the Godhead, and the Godhead is to us everything, the Idea of its Absoluteness and Unity may nevertheless be so preserved that it should embrace this view: because God is the one Absolute, He must exclusively be and remain all being. That view is reached, if we stop at the thought that the Godhead is the original real Possibility of everything, and therefore necessarily one. But the original Possibility still by no means embraces sole and whole existence (*das Alleinllessein*),—that is, that it is the only actuality or existence. It is true the thought should be remote that God Himself, because He is the original Possibility, only remains in a state of possibility; for His idea (*essentia*) rather is, that even to exist, He exists as the original Possibility. But in this view nothing is expressed upon the manner in which actuality is reached; still less is it said that what arises through His agency as the primary Possibility, must still be Himself simply.

If we assume, on the contrary, that an actual world, and not God merely, exists with its own being, *another* difficulty arises in the idea of the unity of the Godhead, which shows itself most if—and upon this point the dogmatic statement will come later—God is thought as a Person, as piety is always wont to represent God. For piety would rather have to do with a plurality of divine beings than with an Absolute which is impersonal; it wants in God or in its gods a higher Thou. If, now, the thesis is false that God alone is everything, and that the Absolute is the only Being, and besides it there is nothing, and if a being is attributed, on the contrary, to men and to the finite generally, the question arises: how is the unity of the Absolute, and especially of the personal God, to be thought as opposed to the world and personal men? They are not He, and He is not they. But in order to seem ex-

<sup>1</sup> If God were only the whole, and the finite were parts of this whole, God would not only be thought as composite, but, since He must also be the parts, religion would be a relation of God to Himself.



cluded from being absolute Being, He must seem, being limited in His Being by the being of others, and especially of persons, to be no longer able to be infinite and absolute, since a world exists. It may, then, at any time be accepted that He, that there may be a world, has subjected Himself to a self-limitation, or a transference into inequality with Himself,<sup>1</sup> and a self-renunciation or decrease of Himself;<sup>2</sup> that there may be room for other beings. At this point the discovery is near, that the Unity of God consists in that, whilst everything has of course a share in being, He alone occupies the highest place among existences, i.e. He has the fullest share of being and power. This is also the thought of that intermediate form between Heathenism and actual Monotheism, namely, Emanationism. There God was thought simply as one individuality amongst others, after they have attained to separate existence, being included in the same generic concept as everything else, being simply higher than everything. The difference between God and man was regarded as merely quantitative,—indeed, God was no longer the supreme Unity of all being, but, at most, had been. Many Deists have attained to such a highest Being (*Être suprême*), which, like Zeus, is not in itself necessarily and essentially, but only contingently One; which is therefore contingently the Highest, just because no other being occupies the same high stage. The contingency of the representation of Zeus would also apply to Jehovah if He were merely regarded as a national God. But with such a supreme Unity no Monotheism, deserving of the name, can be content. The Unity of the Deity must be such that the opposite is not possible, because it has its basis in the qualitative *Solity* of its essential definition, and that basis may be easily derived from the conclusions already gained. The Godhead is not merely the highest amongst the essences which fall generally under the generic idea of being; we should rather recur to the fact that God is the necessary and absolute Being. Were there another Absolute besides Him, He would be limited; His absoluteness would be abolished. Consequently there is only one Absolute, and this is exclusively One; its *Solity* is the ground of its Unity. But its Solity

<sup>1</sup> As Hofmann has it, *Schriftbeweis*, I. pp. 269, 270.

<sup>2</sup> As Schelling would have it in his work, *Philosophie und Religion*.

(and this is the more intimate definition which is opposed to Pantheism) does not consist in the fact that it must be the exclusive and only Being. The being of another is not of necessity excluded from being and from personal being, but only from divine Being. But, of course, singly and alone the Being of God is to be thought as necessarily self-subsisting, whilst every other being will be of another kind, namely, not necessarily self-existent. Rather will that being also which appertains to another be of necessity based in some way in *that Being*, which is the Godhead; for in the Godhead must in any case be contained the ultimate basis of the possibility for every being.<sup>1</sup> How the Unity of God, as of Him who essentially and originally embraces all being, will allow the conception of the actual being of others, and especially of personal being, can only be elucidated later. At this point the view already gained will suffice, that other being may have place side by side with the Godhead, without limiting His Being. The Being of the Godhead as the Absolute is unique of its kind; the world therefore is, in *this* respect, of a kind absolutely dissimilar. The world cannot lay claim to His kind of Being, and thus He cannot be limited by the world. The world cannot, therefore, with the being that it has, be any limitation that could contradict His Absoluteness, because He is and remains the primary possibility of everything. Generally, His Being cannot be co-ordinated with another's, for He must be the very possibility of that other's existence.

Combining what we have discussed, Dualism (and its softened form Deism) is directly excluded by the Absolute; for the Godhead originally comprehends all being in Himself, because only the one Absolute can have original Being, so that there can be no being which might limit the Godhead or be independent of Him. But, on the other hand, acosmistic Pantheism does *not* follow from the fact that God originally embraces in Himself all being. For it may well consist with this opinion, that God is also the primary possibility of other existence. Only, acosmistic Pantheism is still not positively excluded, as the religious interest demands.

*Observation 1.*—The doctrine of an eternal existence of matter must also accept the view that matter is self-existent,

<sup>1</sup> § 18.

and is independent of anything else. But that is contrary to its idea. Matter is definable, changing, and dependent upon spirit and other matter. It cannot therefore be ascribed to it, that it is an essence necessary, self-dependent, and self-existent, which, according to § 18, reason must think. Thus atheistic Materialism is excluded by the result of the Ontological thought. Matter is also mere plurality, not unity.

*Observation 2.*—If a distinction is drawn between Theism, as the doctrine of the only true God, and Deism and Pantheism, it may be said, from what precedes, that the definition of the Godhead as the absolute Being is common to (acosmistic) Pantheism and Theism; but it is a weighty definition as against *Deism*, which opposes the Godhead, as an individuality although as the highest individuality, to other existence. Because God, and He alone, is self-existent, He has in Himself the power of universal Being, the possibility of everything which is not self-existent. Only upon the ground of this original and only Being of God, which, taken alone, does not transcend Pantheism, is the conquest possible over Deism, which essentially co-ordinates God and the world, and which makes God finite, as well as over Dualism. For the constant and absolute dependence of the being of the world upon God is only possible, if God is and therefore remains the absolute primary possibility, or the absolute source of all being according to His *idea*. That idea lies in the words: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy Elohim is one alone."<sup>1</sup>

2. From the absolute Being of God His *Simplicity* has also been derived. That may be attempted in this way:—God as the absolute Unity of being, is also the supreme Unity of all opposites; whilst the world is cloven into plurality, even into contradictions, He is absolutely One with Himself, and has in this sense Unity, Self-resemblance, Identity with Himself: He is  $A = A$ . All opposites are eternally reconciled in Him; in Him they have passed into unity. Nevertheless, this must not be so understood, after what has been previously said, as if God can also unite in Himself what is contradictory, and therefore that nothing is opposed to Him: that He is not something definitive, but He is or may be the opposite to all which He is, by which opinion His idea would be nullified (§ 16). By showing Him to be the absolute and necessary Being, we have rather thought Him a definite Being who is

<sup>1</sup> Deut. iv. 35 (Hebrew).

not everything possible or even impossible. To this definiteness of His, His *Simplicity* or Self-identity of course attaches itself,—“I am that I am,”—upon which truth the *Unchangeableness* of God is wont to be built. But the ancient theologians so think of the Simplicity of God (§ 16), that they exclude all objective difference in the divine Essence. The Simplicity of God is certainly an important distinction, and is embraced in the definition of the Godhead as the absolute Being. If God is the ultimate and absolute Unity, there cannot be contradiction in God; He is rather the original logical Being; indeed, He cannot be compounded out of parts (corporeity), for in that case the parts would precede their result, and God would not be the absolute highest Unity. And because He is not compounded, He is further *no dissoluble unity*. Because He must, as absolute Unity, be unity with Himself and without contradiction, nothing which introduces into the world pain or limitation can be thought in God; therefore also Materiality, which embodies in its essence passivity, changeableness, divisibility, cannot be transferred to Him. For nothing else, call it being or limit of being, can be thought as originally conditioning what is the Absolute and originally Sole, but *only as conditioned*. But, on the other hand, the definition of Simplicity merely expresses, at first, something *negative*; and as something negative it is handled by ancient theologians, although they may possibly mean something positive by it. They apply it not merely to deny contradictions in God, but also to deny objectively distinct attributes.

According to what has been previously said (§ 16), the problem arises, How does the truth or plurality of the divine attributes square with the divine Simplicity? We cannot solve the question here, since we have not such a multiplicity before us, and still less have we the bond of this unity. On the other hand, if such a bond is found, it is to be hoped that, by the interposition of the plurality of the attributes, the Simplicity may be lifted above a merely negative meaning. That will happen, if it comes to pass that the divine Simplicity ought to be thought, not as an abstract and empty identity with self, not as empty, pure being, which can scarcely be distinguished from not-being. It must rather be compatible

with the fulness of the divine attributes. Conversely, this plurality is to be so thought that the differences which will reveal themselves to us in the idea of an absolute Being do not contradict the solid and absolute Unity of God; but they strengthen it, inasmuch as they are eternally brought back by it to internal harmony. A prelude of this, an introduction to the further definiteness of God, coinciding with His internal Unity or Simplicity, we shall soon find (§ 20). Even the Old Testament—which, in opposition to Polytheism, so pre-eminently takes the Unity and immutable Self-identity of God under its protection—already shows, notwithstanding, traces of the acknowledgment of a plurality in God, not simply in His thoughts, but also in His attributes.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the plural Elohim, Adonai, Schaddai, show divine powers, potentialities, which are nevertheless referred to unity; otherwise these names would have been abrogated by Monotheism. Even in the interests of the world, it cannot suffice to ascribe the differences to be found in it to God only as an identity. For that would be to cancel them, and would leave no principle left in God of their diverse reality; and thus the world would itself be threatened with being a semblance (Acosmism). The correct idea of the Simplicity of God will rather be of such a form that the supreme Unity must suffice to be the principle of a plurality, and is therefore not to be thought of as a mere opposite to plurality; just as little, indeed, as the divine Unity is to be thought, in a deistic fashion, merely as the ultimate individuality of existing individualities. The divine Unity must rather be that unity which carries plurality within itself and controls it, which eternally interposes itself by the agency of differences, and in itself indissolubly combines them.

3. INFINITY, OMNIPRESENCE, ETERNITY.—We have now to treat the distinction already mentioned between *Infinitum* (ἄπειρον, ἀπόλυτον) and *Indefinitum* (ὁρίστων). God has no limits, although He has preciseness (ὄρον) in Himself. By the fact that God is something defined, a logical, further, a moral, limitation is of course placed upon His idea. He is not at the same time the opposite of what He is, nor can He be. Were He absolutely without definitiveness, His would be no stable idea,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xl. 6, xcii. 6, cxxxix. 17; Jer. xxix. 11; Isa. lv. 8, 9.

but an absolutely mutable one; He would be in relation to all distinctions absolutely indifferent, *e.g.* in relation to the distinctions between the logical and illogical, and between good and bad. But as an indifferent union of contradictions, He would Himself be an untrue thought; His idea would be self-annulled. But He is rather the Truth, and therefore not destitute of definiteness. To His definiteness there is nevertheless no limitation or finality. Infinity may be already predicated, as a definition of Deity, of His Being in general. It just means that God cannot tolerate in Himself any imperfection or limitation, but is perfect Being. It is in this sense intensive Infinity, and must attach to all additional attributes. But God would not be the absolute Being if any being without Him, which as such must be finite, could render Him finite or limited (§ 19, 1). Now the general forms, in which the finite manifests itself as such, are *Space and Time*; and thus the question arises, How is the relation of the absolute Godhead to these two to be thought? The absolute Being, inasmuch as it is free from all limitation by the finite, is defined as infinite. This infinity is so particularized with respect to the forms of the finite, that in regard to space God is not extended (*unraumlich*); and as opposed to time, God is not successive (*unzeitlich*). Infinite extension in space is excluded by the former—extensive, mathematical infinity, after the pattern of measurable space; by the latter, the existence of God in infinite time which has no beginning or end, so far as He would be included in it. With the former, again, the Immateriality of God is connected. Finite and passive matter, with its divisibility, is not in His Essence. The absolute Being is thoroughly one with itself, and is not composite; the composite is divisible, the divisible is finite and material; thus all this cannot be applied to God. Similarly, a kind of divisibility of God would arise in relation to time, if we thought of His Being not as eternally and absolutely realized, but as only gradually developing, as passing from the potential into the actual state by successive stages. Still, with the Infinity of God as non-extension and non-succession, we still abide in the region of Acosmism, without having attained a statement of positive contents. God would only be omnipresent in Himself, would be everywhere equally Himself, in

Himself and with Himself; just as many Church-teachers say that God is His own place, *ubique totus* in Himself, a statement which some modern writers, as Weisse and Fichte, have so improved upon that they speak of a divine Space, presupposed in creation.<sup>1</sup> Of the positive relation of God to empirical space and empirical time, by the agency of which He first appears in His living activity, we can only speak hypothetically before we have a world. What may be said now categorically, is this: God could not be the absolute Being, if Space or Time were a power superior to Him, as Uranos and Kronos (Space and Time) are represented as older deities, and as it has been recently suggested that Space and Time be represented as original powers which precede God.<sup>2</sup> Space is not Place, and thus, so to speak, the presupposition of God; Time is not the form of His life, so that He, partly at least, should still not really be, should still be non-existent and a mere possibility. But, on the contrary, He is the original and intelligible Seat (*Ort*) for Space and Time. If they mean anything at all objective, God must be their immediate or mediate principle in the ultimate resort.<sup>3</sup> Therefore the absolute Being must also be thought as not subject to succession and to growth, since the thought of absolute Being is the one thing steadfast in the flux of all things temporal. We could know nothing of the flux of time, just as Nature knows nothing of the æons which pass over her, unless we had an absolute fastness in the thought of the God who is exalted above time. Only by the fastness, which remains immovable, is the flux of the fluctuating known,<sup>4</sup>—by God, in whom there is no change, nor even a shadow of the change of light and darkness.<sup>5</sup>

But whilst non-extension and non-succession have still of

<sup>1</sup> Weisse, *Philos. Dogmatik*. I. pp. 575, 580 (similarly Fichte, *Die Idee der Gottheit*, p. 68), regards infinite space as the fundamental form for the life of the inner divine Nature; to thoroughly distinguish it from the spaces, it has a necessary and absolute importance as the immanent presupposition in the creative divine activity.

<sup>2</sup> Von Rohmer.

<sup>3</sup> Whilst space in God can only be a figurative expression, it is of course to be stated, that the whole world, and therefore space, rests upon an intelligible basis, and is eternal in the understanding of God. So of time.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xc. 1, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Jas. i. 17.

themselves something abstract about them, *if* there is a world, something more follows. For in that case a mere negative relation to space and time cannot suffice, because mere elevation above space and time would straightway again render God finite, since it would exclude Him from the sphere of space and time, with which He could not come into contact. God must rather reach beyond space and time, and dominate them without being captivated in turn.<sup>1</sup> The power over space the Psalter depicts in an especially beautiful manner.<sup>2</sup> As ruler over the times, God is called the King of the *Æons*.<sup>3</sup> The positive relation of God to time is *Eternity*, which is not a mere negative idea, and is also no mere infinite relation to time; as Eternal, God rules over the æons in absolute Self-identity. The positive relation of God to Space is expressed in *Omnipresence* or *Everywhereness* (*Allenthalbenheit*). When we regard this idea more closely, the difficult thing is to make it agree with the divine exaltation above space, which necessarily belongs to the divine *Essence*, a thing which cannot be said of the Omnipresence. Non-extension comprehends non-inclusion by space, either by precisely limited space or by space generally.<sup>4</sup> The positive expression is, that He *in se* or *sibi ipsi locus est*.<sup>5</sup> Being independent, then, of the limitation of space, the question comes, —if He must, notwithstanding, have a relation to space and the extended, for without Him they could not be, whether, conversely, He is to be thought as encompassing (*περιέχων*) the extended and space? But in that case He would merely be the greater space as compared with the smaller; instead of being non-extended, He would be space. On the other hand, if He were *merely* that which enclosed, He would, like the periphery of a circle, be shut out from what He enclosed, and thus limited notwithstanding; and although not included, still limited as to relation to space, and not independent of extended existence generally.<sup>6</sup> He must therefore be

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27; Deut. x. 14; Isa. lxvi. 1; Acts vii. 49, xvii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxxix. 7-12.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. iv. 9, xi. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Dogmatics expresses the former thus: He is not *definitive*; the second: He is not *circumscriptive*, enclosed in space.

<sup>5</sup> Theophilus, *ad Autol.* ii. 10: αὐτῷ αὐτοῦ τόπος. Joann. Dam. *Orth. fid.* i. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Theophilus says that God surrounds the world as the shell encloses the pomegranate. *Ad Autol.* i. 5, edit. Otto, p. 16.



in all, yet not captivated by it.<sup>1</sup> That is the meaning of the expression: Everywhereness, or *Omnipresence*. But, again, both ancient writers and new teach that God is *repletive* in everything, He is omnipresent in everything by His Substance;<sup>2</sup> His fulness filleth all in all. But thus the double question arises: How can things really fill space, if God fills all things? Again, if God is an infinitely-extended Being, *substantialiter ubique diffusus*, He seems to lose Himself in the infinity of space, and all definiteness appears necessarily dissolved. There especially seems, in such diffusion in extensive relation to space, to be no place left for the Personality of God. To evade this difficulty, the *Socinians* believed it necessary to receive into the divine idea finiteness and limitation—likewise confounding definiteness with limitation.<sup>3</sup> *Conrad Vorstius* teaches an *essentialis finitudo* of God; God has a *vera quædam magnitudo et quantitas*, for He is defined according to His most peculiar essence (*propria natura definitus*). In heaven He is present according to His essence; everywhere else He is present by His efficiency merely. At the same time, by this limitation of the divine Substance, finite things are not obliged to be dislodged from their space. But since such limitation in the divine Essence manifestly abrogates the divine Absoluteness, *others* have endeavoured to afford help by the opinion that they simply regarded finite things as the manifestation of the infinite divine Substance. Thus they could establish

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *de divers. quæst.* xx., like the Alexandrian Fathers, denies that He embraces things as space, or that He is in space at all. Everything is in Him, He has no space. Comp. Nitzsch, *Chr. Dogmengeschichte*, 1878, I. p. 283; Schwane, *Dogmengesch. d. patrist. Zeit*, 1869, pp. 96–101. Theophilus and Arnobius say, on the other hand: He is the Place for everything, the Place of everything, *εἶναι τὸν τόπον*. Theoph. ii. 8; Arnobius, *adv. natl.* i. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Joann. Dam.: "Everything is filled by Him;" Augustine: "He is *non quasi mole diffusa ubique diffusus*," *Epist.* 187, 11, 14. According to the previous note, there is to be no thought of extension in space. (Newton's notion is: "God is the *Sensorium commune* of everything;" whilst Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, III., pursues the thought of Leibnitz: "God is the vinculum for the manifold of the universe.") Quenstedt, I. 288: "God is *ubique illocaliter, impartibiliter, non definitivè ut spiritus, non circumscriptivè ut corpora, sed repletivè*." Philippi thinks that the possibility of misunderstanding in the expression *repletive* is removed by these negations annexed; whilst he had previously denied that the presence of God filled space, and denied its extension, pp. 46, 47.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Strauss, *Dogmatik*, I. p. 560; C. Vorstius, *De Deo*, etc., 1610.

without difficulty that God is *in* the things, and still leave them an existence; as in this case also God was not necessarily dissolved in the All and in infinite space, but He retained His definiteness as the essence of the manifestation.<sup>1</sup> Not a few Church-teachers approach this point of view, as when they say: "God is the Being of all being, the Essence of essence, the inmost Substance of everything." If, then, the Pantheistic theory is to be avoided, which may hold this latter view, and if also the Personality of God is not to be initially excluded, without falling into the *Deistic* separation of God and the world, that can only be done by advancing from the category of *Substantiality* to that of *Causality*. For by that means God may hold an intimate relation to the world without being necessarily identical with it or its essence; in that way the formula is preserved: "God encloses everything, everything is in Him," and at the same time the truth of the other formula: "He is present in everything." By causality it remains *thinkable* that God has an immanence in the world which exists by His power, and yet has a transcendence opposed to the world. In Himself non-extended, and Himself His own space, He is "the absolutely spaceless causality which conditions space together with all that is extended."<sup>2</sup> That opinion the Teachers of the Church also hold when they say: "God is not the *Esse materiale* in things, but *causale*." At the same time, the divine independence of space, and what relates to space, is secured by that view, as well as His power over space, both of which we embrace in the words *freedom from space*. Further, it is foreseen that God is not everywhere or omnipresent by a necessity of His nature; for His omnipresence is only possible on the ground of His creative (*weltsetzenden*) causality, which is on its side conditioned (as will be shown later) by His will, and not merely by His nature. When others seek to ensure the better the separate being (*Fürsichsein*) of finite things by their depend-

<sup>1</sup> So the learned work worth reading, *Die Allgegenwart Gottes*, Gotha 1817 (by Ewald). The anonymous author calls his view esoteric, supersensual, or internal Pantheism. Also, according to Hegel, *Relig. Philos.* I. p. 268, is the Omnipresence of God nothing else than His absolute Substantiality, the Being of God in things existent.

<sup>2</sup> Schleiermacher, *Chr. Glaube*, I. § 53: "*Die mit allem Räumlichen auch den Raum bedingende schlechthin raumlose Ursächlichkeit.*"

ence upon God, and to secure the distinction between God and the world, by saying that God is not omnipresent according to His substance (*essentia*), but only by virtue of His efficiency, which is to be thought as a remote working (*actio in distans*), the Fathers of the Church rightly contradict that view, since they demand for the divine Omnipresence the *adessentia*, the *ἀδιασπασία*, in harmony with the New Testament;<sup>1</sup> but they observe in reference thereto, that the divine Causality has, it is true, the world immediately present, but the effective divine Substance is not to be thought as corporeally extended. Were God, on the other hand, merely thought to be working from a distance, He would be again transposed into space, and that would be contrary to His non-relation thereto; and were He separated from things by an interval, He would be limited by space, and that would be contrary to His power over space, to His positive freedom from space, which is thought together with the Omnipresence.<sup>2</sup> Besides, it is questionable whether the thought of a working at a distance, without the presence of the object influenced, is thinkable.

As we have now by the idea of *Freedom from space* excluded the false element which might lurk in the non-extension or elevation above space and in the everywhere-ness regarded alone, and have embodied the truth signified by both, the same method is to be pursued with respect to the exaltation of God above *time* (non-succession), and His control over time. Both facts are embraced in the expression *Freedom from time*, or Eternity, which latter word has already in common language both a negative and a positive side. God in His internal Being is exalted above time, above the succession of moments, above temporal development, by His eternal Absoluteness. Although various powers which condition each other are found in God, still they

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii. 24-28; Jer. xxiii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> If many theologians would have the *omnipraesentia operativa* without the *omnipraesentia essentialis, substantialis*, or *adessentia*,—e.g. Michaelis, *Dogm.* 2d edit. p. 173; Reinhard, § 118; Wegscheider, *Instit. Theol.* 3d edit. § 64, and Steudel himself, p. 123,—they are led partly by a deistic tendency, which also appertains to the old Supernaturalism, and partly by a fear of Pantheism. But, as Bretschneider rightly sees, Omnipresence is scarcely to be distinguished any longer from Omnipotence. Endemann, *Instit. th. dogm.* 1777, I. pp. 100, etc., clings to the divine Omniscience along with the *omnipr. oper.* by which He *omnia immediate sibi repraesentat*. Thus Omnipresence is identical with Omnipotence and Omniscience.

do not condition each other in such a way that they fall apart into a succession, as is the case in finite life; but succession is avoided by their simultaneity, their eternally efficient presence. This eternal Self-containment (*Insichsein*) of the absolute Being in His internal Eternity is the presupposition and basis for both the negative and positive statements upon the relation of God to time and space.<sup>1</sup> In the divine independence of space and time, there is already a union signified of the Self-containment of God and His altruistic containment (*eine Einigung des Insichseins und des Ausersichder in einem andern Seins*), of Transcendence and Immanence, which will come into clearer light later on, and show itself, as the united power of Self-preservation and Self-communication, to be of the highest importance.

From His internal Absoluteness, which elevates His Being above extension and succession, God cannot decline; decline would annul His idea. But there is another question, whether the eternal freedom from space and time is to be so thought, that God must on His side have continually and immutably a similar relation to space and time. That God is not constrained by His *Being* to be everywhere present, or to have a positive relation to time, follows from what precedes, inasmuch as the universe, without which there can be no mention of actual space or time at all, is not made by His Nature or His Substance, but by His Causality. On the other hand, if a world exists, a positive relation of God to space and time is given with logical necessity. But now a further question arises, whether God with His Omnipresence and His Eternity must occupy an absolutely equal relation to everything extended and successive, equal in grade, quality, or kind? The question has a wide bearing upon a vital conception of the divine relation to the world of Providence, Government, etc. It has also a reference to the correct idea of the Immutability of God in His active and living relation to the world.<sup>2</sup> The way to the solution of the question is already shown by what precedes. If we must recur to the divine Causality, through

<sup>1</sup> Still the spirituality of God cannot be deduced from that alone, as Biedermann thinks. Of itself the Absoluteness of God is notwithstanding no spiritual category. But the desire to deduce the spiritual from the non-spiritual, is under all circumstances to be avoided.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. the treatise upon the Divine Immutability, *Jahrb. f. deutsche Theol.* III. pp. 605, etc.; Augustin, *Epist.* 187, 16, etc.

which He rules over the extended and space, the successive and time, then the divine Omnipresence and Intervention in time is conditioned by the nature of that which the creative causality will evoke or has evoked. If, then, God wills a *κόσμος*, which is certainly not to be established in this place, the Omnipresence of God in the world and its manifoldness must be in correspondence with these contents of the *κόσμος*, and thus the relation of God to the world of time and to History must be a various and not an identical one.

But we must endeavour to come somewhat more closely to the fact. This variety comes to pass because the divine Omnipresence and Eternity assume for us a living form. Thus they are in things and yet above them, a circumstance which is of importance for the right idea of the divine Immutability. If there is a world, the distinction of times and spaces is not annulled for God, just as His will does not eternally produce the same thing. If we thought of God as working in an eternally similar manner, if no hindrance oppose Him, one and the same result must eternally ensue,—that is to say, the world would either exist without the variety of history, or, since the world does not stand still, a hindrance would have to be supposed to the eternally similar actuality of God and an origination of the variety of *stages*, a dualism, in fact, which would controvert His Absoluteness. Spaces and times with their contents are certainly alike in this, that God is the absolute Power over them. But if history and variety in the world are not to be semblance but reality and the real effect of God, God must have an Omnipresence in the world related to the constitution of the world, or more accurately, to His own purpose concerning the world; and it does not follow from His Self-identity that He must actually have simply the same relation of His presence, which is certainly eternally operative, to everything in the world, and therefore have the same relation in matter as in living beings, in living beings the same as in men, in Christ the same as in other men. If it is said, with illustrious teachers from Augustine to Schleiermacher, it is only the receptivity of the world which varies, that receptivity is the cause of the seeming variety in the divine presence, it receives the various impressions from the God who is equally presented to everything, the question comes, Who originates the varying receptivity at diverse times?

We should still be referred by such an opinion to a basis in God, which would contain the principle of the partition of the world, and at the same time of the varying being of God in the world. A mere eternally similar working of God would lead to Deism, if the world is not semblance. It is the same with time. If there is a really progressive world and history, God cannot have a relation, which is eternally similar only, to past, present, and future, as though they were one point. If to God a longer or a shorter duration is simply equivalent, upon which matter an inaccurate exegesis of Pa. xc. 4 and 2 Pet. iii. 8 has misled,—if “in relation to God one thing is not past, and another present, and another future, but everything collapses into one point in reference to God, into the present,”<sup>1</sup>—then History is mere appearance, and devoid of valuable result. If time and growth are not to be semblance, there must be a difference really, and therefore also as regards God, between what is now past and what is present, between the present and the future. God can, for example, no more regard the past of the converted sinner as present, than He can look upon the future of the unconverted man who is about to return to Him as present. If God merely saw the past and the future altogether as present (as Augustin’s formula runs, which is so readily adopted by many, that in reference to God everything stands in an eternal present), the immediate consequence would be that God would not see everything as it is; and therefore not truly, for neither the past nor the future is present. The formula may indeed be a mere statement of the certainty and clearness, in which even the future and the past stand before God, and thus it has a meaning. On the other hand, God must be able to have a different relation to different æons and spaces, without prejudice to His Self-identity; because He is unchangeably the truth according to His Essence, He must straightway be the one basis for a variously ordered relation to space and time. A change of an unallowable kind would not occur in Him by the fact that an alteration takes place in His knowledge, to the effect that what is still future, and which He therefore does not yet know as actual, He knows as present, when it has become present. Nevertheless, just as the positive idea of the freedom from space and time is only first

<sup>1</sup> Philippi, II. pp. 37, 38.

methodically and not merely hypothetically gained, when we have made the divine Omnipotence sure, so also the divine relation to space and time, which orders itself in various ways, will only appear in harmony with the divine Self-identity when we are in possession of the spirituality and the ethical perfection of the idea of God. Freedom from space and freedom from time will therefore only receive their more concrete meaning when we have brought them into union with other divine attributes of volition and knowledge. But as regards the Self-identity and Immutability of God, it results from what precedes, that they cannot be applied without distinction to everything and anything in God, they cannot be applied either to His actual knowledge or volition. They need not issue in the non-animate (see § 27).

*Observation.*—The remaining proofs for the divine existence lend their aid in order to obtain from absolute and infinite Being more intimate definitions of the concept of God. So far as these proofs proceed in a mere empirical manner, accept what is given from without, and thence infer God or certain predicates of God, they may indeed be too weak collectively to effect what they would. They cannot of themselves answer for the being of the absolute Essence, but they simply afford us categories or predicates which belong in the first place to the world, without being able to prove the being of God and the existence of those predicates in God. What is gained in the Ontological moment, which answers for the necessary *being* of the absolute Essence, may notwithstanding be employed in behalf of those predicates, and the Ontological proof allows itself to be so associated with them all, that by their means there is an enrichment and a more intimate definition of the idea of the absolute Essence, which necessarily exists, established in the Ontological proof. This advance is possible and natural. For, since our thought empirically embraces a consciousness of the world and a consciousness of self, although God alone is recognised as the absolute and existent Essence, who must be thought by the reason, the problem arises of putting this consciousness of the world and of self in relation with the idea of this absolute Essence. Only thus can our thinking spirit as it exists *in concreto*, come into unity and harmony with that highest and necessary Thought and Being. In turning, therefore, to the second class of proofs, which start from being, indeed empirical being, and endeavour to reach God, we combine those proofs after appropriate sifting

with the Ontological in such a way that the Ontological proof may also establish existence for the predicates, the existence of which those proofs do not argue, and establish their existence indeed as real attributes in the absolute Essence; whilst, on the other hand, they are proofs which give predicates to the absolute Essence, able to co-exist with His idea. The scientific task will be completed when at the suggestion of these empirical arguments the concept of the absolute Essence actually itself attains to a fuller precision, and, so to speak, discloses itself with that view.

### § 20.—*The Cosmological Moment.*

If the absolute Essence is primarily the whole of Being, not merely is (acosmistic) Pantheism not obviated, but the absolute Essence is itself thought as a mere infinite void. Thus the demand of the consciousness of an external world (*Weltbewusstsein*) which is conscious of not having to do with appearance merely, unites with the tendency of the idea of God, which has no desire to remain an idea of an empty and dead Being. The exaltation of the highest idea ought not to condemn it to poverty (§ 19, 2). It is at this point that the Cosmological argument promises to offer a further aid, seeing that it endeavours by means of the category of causality to establish God as the cause of the world. The most intimate application of this category leads to the concept of God as the self-related Causality. God as the absolute Essence is both originator and originated, and that by His own agency, or is Self-originating (and thus the category of causality passes into the category of reciprocal action).

*Observation 1.*—We have to concern ourselves in the present section with the categories of identity, substantiality, and causality, arising from Being, which are to be applied as different notes of the essence or definitions of God, which even form, indeed, the fundamental idea of several historic religions. If we already placed the idea of causality side by side with those of identity and substantiality in the preceding section, that was done only hypothetically,—on the supposition that



a world existed,—and therefore proleptically. We have now to win in scientific fashion the advance from Being and Substance to Causality.

*Observation 2.*—In each of the main categories to be won of the concept of God, attention is to be bestowed upon a religion in which that concept forms the central point; and since every religion is characterized by its concept of God, all the main historical religions will come into view. This course of proceeding, if thorough, is adapted to show the great importance of each of these categories, a whole religion having been able to live thereupon. The scientific progress of our inquiry will find a further confirmation in the fact that each of the main categories answers to a leading form in the history of religions. If then, lastly, the Christian concept of God shows itself the goal of the whole process of critical survey, a process which finds its resting-place in none of the extra-Christian religions, but all the true features of which are preserved and crowned in the Christian concept, the superiority of the latter to all extra-Christian religions, and the necessity of their transition, will have been shown.

1. At the idea of the absolute Essence, which, though not wholly indeterminate in contents, is yet poor and not particularly definite, thought cannot stop. In the unifying impulse of the reason to esteem all distinctions in the highest One forlorn, and to think that One itself under the simple category of self-identity as  $A = A$ , thought can only rest content with that idea of absolute Essence, so long as nothing else is subjected to that One, and the plurality of things and thoughts is still so diffused an element that the spirit of the past unity, which dominates everything, has not yet asserted itself with regard to the plurality of the finite. That is the position of the Eleatic philosophy, whose religious side-piece is a Mysticism which would make everything sink into God and vanish. Absolute, pure, and infinite Being has been variously treated as a definition of God. Amongst the historical religions, Buddhism, which ends in the doctrine of Nihilism (Nirwana), especially corresponds with that view. It is the *Βυθός* of the Gnostics, the abysmal pure Being, the supereminent (beyond, *i.e.*, all determinations and distinctions, and therefore related to everything indifferently) of the Neoplatonists and of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. To this class the *absolute indifference* in Schelling's earlier system also

belongs, in which subject and object are annulled, without being again methodically developed from that indifference. In the thought of this One, of pure and infinite Being, there undeniably lies something of elevation and freedom. But it is not casual that Hegel makes this pure Being, this result of Phenomenology, pass at the commencement of his *Logik* into Nothing [not-Being], wrongly it is true. For, in the thought of pure, infinite Being, Being is not denied, as the thought of Nothing denies it; and even the *thought* of pure Being is not identical with the thought of Nothing; in pure Being there is still the possibility, although not the realization, supposed or intended, of richer determinations of that Being; only they are not yet uttered. Still it is unquestionable that the thought of pure absolute Being leads us primarily to a void Infinitude or "waste," to an abyss, rigid, motionless, and cold. Therefore the religious spirit of the Mystics has always wished to advance from this world of pure Being to definite determinations,<sup>1</sup> seen in the revelation of this pure Being. A speculative thought which is occupied with ultimate elements and a Mysticism which does not understand itself, both find in that pure and absolute Being what is highest and ultimate, and an infinite deep. Nevertheless it is manifest that Being of itself as absolute is the most universal category of all, and the poorest; and Eunomius was right when he said that we could wholly grasp God, if He were nothing but Being. Those who are content with that category can be so because they mean by it more than they say, *i.e.* because they think God as that Being, who is not only self-identical and the ultimate *unity*, but also as necessary and self-existent, indeed as the possibility of an infinite fulness. But the important thing is to attain this fulness.

2. How then are we to proceed from universal and infinite Being to richer definitions, or from pure Being to an onward movement, to a progress in knowledge and to definitions indeed, not introduced from without, but necessarily thought in the Being of God, so that the concept of God may be further defined? Since the problem is to advance from the category of identity  $A = A$ , the first question is, whether the next category to that of Identity, namely, the category of Substantiality, will

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Martensen, *Meister Eckhart*, 1842.

not lead us farther, there being given therewith the concept of Accidents?

Spinoza designates God, the *Essentia* which exists by its very idea,—Substance. According to him, Substance has attributes, thought and extension, *Modi* also. But he has not linked these attributes, which were more than the accidents correlative to Substance, with the idea of Substance. They are accepted dogmatically from experience. Substance logically corresponds, it is true, with its correlate, with accident, a modification of or in substance. But it must be questionable whether accidents may be introduced in God, seeing that it is elevation above the contingent which can give us, and has given us, the first thought of absolute Being (§ 18). Thus it is difficult to see how an advance can be made from the category of Substance, if we have not to do with the contingent. But a substance, which merely gives us something accidental and not necessary, cannot give us more than we have already. We cannot thus transcend the category of Identity (§ 19).

Hegel seeks to move onwards from that void of absolute Being, which is to be more precisely distinguished from Nothing by just applying Nothing, or the principle of Negation, as the principle of movement or advance, as the more intimate and concrete definition of pure Being. This he does not in such a way that he introduces negation as the limit and principle of division into infinite Being, after the manner of the ancients, who divided and separated universal Being in this way into many parts, so that infinite Being as a unity or whole equals God, and as divided equals World; but in such a way that, as has been said, he makes void Being veer round to its antithesis—Nothing, even makes it Nothing, then proceeds to the synthesis of the opposition, and again combines this opposition of Being and Nothing by incorporating Negation with pure Being, or proceeding to that unity of Being and Nothing which he expresses by Becoming. But it is not evident by what power Hegel can make pure Being veer round to Nothing, as to an idea different from Being. Nothing is only derived by him out of pure Being, in the sense that pure Being is not Something, is not some determinate single thing, and not in the sense of Nothing proper. But if there is

derived from pure Being only a Nothing which is not Something, which is nothing determinate, but just universal Being, we have in that thought nothing new favourable to movement and progress; such a Nothing leads us no further than pure Being. And advance might be immediately made *just as well or just as little* from pure Being to Becoming, as from pure Being to Nothing. Becoming is certainly a composite idea, with which Hegel did not desire to begin upon good grounds. But what he premises, Being and Nothing, is no basis. He might just as well have begun with the assurance that "the Absolute is Becoming."<sup>1</sup>

But even Becoming, which is in truth Hegel's fundamental category, corresponding to the restless advance of his dialectic method, is not adapted to pass for a definition of God, for a precise designation of the Absolute. It is true that, compared with pure motionless Being, movement is given in Becoming.<sup>2</sup> But we cannot use Becoming as a commencement, for instead of stiff, lifeless Being we should have in "Becoming" a principle of movement, but one that was restless and aimless. Such a principle might provide for an eternal mutation, but not a firm ground for a more concrete idea of God. If God, even after He has passed into and through Nature, and become Spirit, is only Becoming, then absolute Spirit, in order to carry on the Becoming, must subside into His other form of Being (Nature), out of which He will raise Himself again to absolute Spirit in an eternal round. In absolute Becoming of itself we should have a commencement, which could never reach a goal, but only eternal Heraclitic flux, the restless transition from one thing to another. We should have in eternal dialectic unrest without actual progress, if not a comfortless *progressus*

<sup>1</sup> In his later philosophy Schelling begins his Ontology with the Possibility of Being, just as we had to think (§ 18) God as the Original Possibility of Being, although in another sense. That beginning promises to be of some value. Hegel's Becoming is also a Possibility of Being, but contrasted with the idea of absolute Being; it led back to the finite and to definitions, which were to be again negated, in order to be only so far as we are already. To apply the finite to a more intimate definition of Godhead *via negationis*, only succeeds if the finite is merely distinguished from God by Negation, and thus quantitatively, §§ 16, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Trendelenburg, in his *Logische Untersuchungen*, accepts motion as the fundamental idea, in Aristotelic fashion and in similar interests. Comp. 2d edit. I pp. 141, etc. But he goes further, and treats of Teleology.

*in infinitum*, a mere circular movement such as is seen in natural life. Where there is only movement, and this is absolute, there is no firm goal where movement may come to rest, no firm measure according to which a progress might result. Further, where there is only Becoming, there is still fettered Being, and therefore a want of Being. If God were Himself simply eternally Becoming, He would first seek His perfect realization by the process, and would not be absolutely Being. We should thus have less in absolute Becoming than in absolute Being. Of course something higher is also indicated in Becoming than mere Being, namely, Life, Motion; but at this great definition it is impossible to arrive by mere negation, incorporated in Being.

*Observation.*—More promising, therefore, is the inverse method Schelling pursues.<sup>1</sup> He does not wish to introduce something as wanting in the first original idea, the annihilation of which would form the process of advance, but he begins his Ontology or Doctrine of Being with an indeterminate idea, the Possibility of Being (*Seinkönnen*), the indeterminateness and ambiguity of which is just its defect, which is still met with in this first original idea, or is not yet exceeded—a lack which, by a critical procedure, or by the separation of the ambiguous, an endeavour is to be made to remove, until by means of such separation what remains becomes free and unloosed as the true concept of God, whom he designates by saying God is the Lord of Being. In this process it is methodically recognised as correct that we must seek to advance by the agency of separations of the defects still remaining in our first, and still insufficiently determinate, idea, or apparent possibilities. With the mere exhibition of lack there is given, it is true, the necessity for advance, but still not advance itself to positive and wider definitions. In the Ontological argument, then, we are compelled to conceive the absolute Essence not as mere Possibility of Being, not as mere Original Possibility, but as existent Original Possibility, as Being which carries its possibility in itself, and what is contained in that fact will possibly surrender itself to us, if we retain our connection with the proofs for the Existence of God, and first of all with that Moment, which is the universal *genus* for all that follows to some degree, and which also stands in internal relation with the Ontological argument, viz. the Cosmological.

<sup>1</sup> *Einleit. zur Philosophie der Mythologie und Philosophie der Offenbarung.*

3. The *Cosmological argument*, together with the relation of Causality upon which it rests, promises to enrich absolute Being with a new definition. Indeed, it promises to conduct us beyond the indeterminateness which the Ontological argument could not of itself yet surmount, that argument not excluding the possibility that God is simply everything that is, and not yet excluding Pantheism of the acosmistic form. Whilst the category of the mere Identity of the absolute Essence with itself, or of its self-identity, leaves us in the abstract, and the category of Substantiality leaves us in substantial Pantheism, and the category of absolute Becoming does not lead us actually forwards, since it is not exempt from the Pantheism of an eternal, aimless, dialectic process, the concept of *the absolute Cause* affords a better prospect. According to its logical prerogative, the relation of causality connects the effect with its cause in no mere casual manner, inasmuch as the effect does not merely refer us to the cause, but there is no causation where there is not an effect. Still such a fact does not state that the cause itself works necessarily, and the effect is so far contingent, a point which the Cosmological argument in its customary form seeks of itself to turn to advantage, instead of allowing itself to be disturbed thereby. By means of Causality that argument trusts to prove the Existence of God as the Cause of the World.

"Everything in the world has its cause. But every cause is in turn also for that very reason the effect of another cause. Thus there is in the world a continuous chain of causes, which looked at from behind are effects in their turn, and of effects which, viewed from before, are also causes. Thus everything in the world has its basis without itself, *i.e.* is *contingent* and not necessary, because it is dependent upon something without. And what is true of individual things must also hold of the world as a whole. Applying the law of causation to it as a unity, we must also inquire after its cause. But if we simply ascend endlessly from effects to other effects and other causes, we should have a series of effects without a beginning, which is as unthinkable as a stream without a source. Therefore the reason must accept a necessary fundamental Cause of the world, which is not in its turn an effect of another cause. That Being is God."

The objective validity of the Law of Causation has indeed been doubted, as by David Hume, and also Kant.<sup>1</sup> We only arrive, it is said, at the *propter hoc* from the *post hoc* by a paralogism, by the habit of expecting similar consequences according to earlier experiences. But that there inheres in the spirit the necessity of asking after the cause of everything is undeniable. The question, Whence? is imposed upon and innate in the rational being of man as an internal law. And to ascribe truth to what the reason *must* think is perfectly justified, because the opposite opinion leads not merely to critical scepticism, as Kant would have it, but to "absolute" scepticism (§ 18). But even if we ascribe objective validity and truth, as well as necessity, to the Law of Causation, at least as regards the retrogression from effect to cause, nevertheless the Cosmological argument of itself does not yet perform what in its customary form it promises. It presupposes the being of the world as a firm and certain being, in order to derive God as the cause of the world from that presupposition. But the world is not something certain of itself and by itself, as indeed the conclusion itself already acknowledges that the cause is found in God of the world which is "contingent." If the world is contingent, it may possibly not exist. Inasmuch as the syllogism takes the same thing, the world, in a double sense, as sure in the premiss and not sure in the result, there is a *quaternio terminorum*, and therefore the inference is not cogent. But even if the existence of the world, and of a necessary and sufficient cause for it, is accepted, still the existence of that which we call God by no means follows, since it may be said that "the world in the manifoldness of its phenomena must have one cause. But this cause, the plastic impulse for its forms, is the very being of the world, beyond which we cannot go. The world is constituted to depend eternally upon itself, and to show itself fruitful by the change of its forms, as if it were an inexhaustible womb." In this case we should have at best exchanged abstract and substantial Pantheism for dynamic.

4. We may, nevertheless, employ the concept of Causality,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Dr. Edm. Pfleiderer, *Empirismus und Skepsis in Dav. Humes Philosophie*, 1874, pp. 159-196.

which the Cosmological proof applies inconclusively to the relation between God and the world, if, instead of casting our eyes precipitately across to the world, we simply abide by what has been previously reached, by absolute and necessary Being, and thus apply the idea of causation, which, of course, comes into our consciousness at the suggestion of the world, to the divine sphere itself.

If we develop the idea of causation in its application to God, fixing it more precisely than Spinoza did, who confounded it with the idea of that which existed *sponte* or *ultro*, the following is the result, after what has been previously said :—

(a) In the Ontological proof we have found God to be the real original possibility of thought, being, and knowledge, and to be absolute. But He cannot be thought as mere possibility of *Himself*, potentially existing, and not existing *actu*, just as little as He can be thought as passing over into *actus*, or into existent reality successively; He is actually and absolutely existent, He is absolutely in Himself realized Potentiality (*Potenz*), *actus purissimus*.

For did He first become actual, He would be subject to Time; and were the real and absolute Potence, which He is, not to become actual, something restraining, conditioning, limiting must be assumed, which kept Him in the potential state, which is equally unthinkable whether that something be thought within or without Him.

(b) But if, now, God is actually and absolutely existing, still the absolute potentiality (or causality), which He was eternally, cannot be extinct in the divine reality, cannot have ceased in the action, in that realization of Deity. God must be the perennial and eternal cause of His absolute reality, and not merely the past and contingent cause. God must be *ab aliquo*; that the Law of Causation requires; and, because not *ab alio*, necessarily *a se*. He has *Aseity*. That means that whilst the finite has the real possibility or the centre of gravity of its being without itself, the centre of gravity of absolute Being does not lie outside of God, but falls within His own circumference. The infinite series of effect and cause, cause and effect, retrogrades, by the *Aseity*, into itself; in the Absolute the *progressus in infinitum* comes to the stand, which is predicated in the relation of cause and effect,



and thus assumes these objective definitions into itself. God has not, so to speak, once, in the past, constituted Himself the absolutely and actually existent; He has thus constituted Himself eternally. He is and remains the real ground of His absolute reality. As that basis He is eternally the absolute and real Potentiality or Causality of Himself, the real possibility of His reality.

(c) Therefore both facts are to be supposed to be equally necessary. God is the absolute reality of being, and the absolute originating power of His reality. Thus an eternal distinction is already gained in the absolute Essence of God. He is at once originator and that originated. Not merely is He Product or Factum, but He is also Factor, and conversely. Both are united without dualism, only in such a way that even as product He is not supposed to be merely passive. The Deity, as a fact and an effect, must be as really divine, just as the Deity working must be adequate to Him wrought. For what should restrain the Deity working, or make His working or His work imperfect? Thus the effect of the absolute Cause must therefore be adequate, and only in that way has the Cause become wholly Cause, and has causation quite effected that the effect is an absolute effect. But if that is so, the Deity, as originated and made an effect, is Himself active in turn, He is so originated that He originates again. By this retrogression from the originated to the originating, the relation of causation is not broken through or violated, but continued and perfected in the reciprocal action. God as originated and as originator stands in the relation of reciprocal action. The Deity as originated is eternally one with the Deity originating, in this way, that the former is referred again to the cause, and is related in a causal and conditioning manner to that cause, just as the effect was immanent in the cause from the beginning. And thus God is not to be simply defined as absolute Causality, but there is to be predicated of Him, so to speak, a double-sided causality (as absolute reciprocal action), as a circular motion<sup>1</sup> of originating that is at the same time originated, of being originated that is at the same

<sup>1</sup> This circular motion is for ever perfect without prejudice to its truth, and is therefore essentially different from the circular movement of Hegel's *Becoming*.

time activity, to be expressed in the proposition that *God is absolute Life*. For God is absolute Life in Himself, not by His being realized once for all, but by eternal Self-realization; thus the absolute Potentiality or Possibility of Himself is not lost in action, but is securely preserved therein.

*Observation 1.*—Even Athanasius has applied the idea of causation in a purely speculative manner, as well in the religious interest which longs for a living God, in order to exhibit differences in God as necessary, in opposition to the representation of Arius, who would only think God under the category of Identity with Himself, or as abstract Self-identity ( $A = A$ ), as in opposition to Sabellianism, which would stop at the category of Substantiality. Comp. Voigt, *Die Lehre des Athanasius von Alex.* 1861.

*Observation 2.*—Frank admirably says, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, I. pp. 115, etc., we shall have to regard it as a mere activity of the Absoluteness, not as an opposition to the same, if in His absolutely free Self-movement God finds in Himself only the goal of that movement, if His Self-externalization coalesces with His Self-subsistence by means of His Self-origination. "There is a continual rotation perfected at every point of the absolute Self-movement out of Himself and into (*sic*) Himself, in which the result of the movement gives a place to nothing but what was contained in the basis of the movement." Similarly he gives prominence rightly to the weighty religious significance, indeed, to the religious derivation of the doctrine of the divine Aseity, of the Being of God absolutely out of and by Himself; as also he renders it prominent that it would be objectionable to constitute God a mere potentiality, instead of eternally realized, and also that He eternally originates Himself. We cannot speak, indeed, in this place of "Freedom and Self-subsistence," because we can only speak of Will and Intelligence later. In absolute Being there is certainly included the fulness of all realities, but still not projected independently; nor can spirit be derived from it.

*Observation 3.*—It cannot be said that Aseity, far remote as it is from being a consequence of the Law of Causation, contradicts that law, since the chain of causes ends at God, seeing that He cannot be produced by another than Himself. For the idea of causation does not imply that the producer must be altogether a different thing to the product; this alone is necessary, that a thing should not be the product in that relation in which it produces. So, also, it is incorrect to say

that the doctrine of the divine self-origination presupposes that what originates becomes in turn that originated. But there is a difference between God as originator and God as originated, although in the circular movement of the divine Life that which is originated is in turn living and originating, and, indeed, refers to that which originates, which also becomes thereby originated. Apart from this diremption, the "rotation," "the circuit of life," would be impossible. The living organism is an example of this. But by His Aseity God is absolutely sole Being, and not the highest genus of general existence.

### § 21.

God is absolute Life, ἡ ζωή, immanent in Himself, and He is the principle of life, where life exists.

*Observation.*—The ancient religion of India, or Brahmanism, stops at the definition of God as absolute Life.

1. *God is living.*—God may not allowably be thought as mere Being in repose, or merely as ideal and thinking. As absolute Life, He has a *πλήρωμα*, a world of real forces in Himself. He bears within Him an inexhaustible spring, by virtue of which He is Life eternally streaming forth, but also eternally streaming back into Himself. Still He is not to be defined as transient Life; He is before everything essentially absolute Life; He neither empties nor loses Himself in His vital activity. He is a sea of self-revolving life; an infinite fulness of forces moves, so to speak, and undulates therein. This definition is especially frequent in the Scriptures, and not merely as compared with idols, but also in Himself He is called living or Life.<sup>1</sup> And in the New Testament He is called the One "who alone has immortality," the First and the Last, who is Himself living, and is the power of life.<sup>2</sup> God is not a God of the dead. The life of God is expressed in an especially picturesque manner in that vision in Ezekiel<sup>3</sup> where the theme is Living Beings (חַיִּים, זָוָא), who are not

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xvi. 14, xxiv. 62, xxv. 11; 1 Sam. xvii. 36; 2 Kings xix. 4; Ps. xlii. 2, lxxxiv. 2; Jer. x. 10, xxiii. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiv. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 16, iii. 15, iv. 10; 2 Cor. iii. 3, vi. 16; Rom. ix. 26; Heb. x. 31; Rev. ii. 8, vii. 2, xii. 13; John vi. 68, 69; Matt. xxii. 32. Comp. Ps. xxxvi. 9; 1 Sam. ii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. i.; comp. Rev. iv.

angels, but who belong to the throne of God or to His manifestation. They are united with the symbols of wheels which lift of themselves and move freely on all sides, because in them there is a spirit of life, of forcibly revolving life, which flashes to and fro. The wheels point to the circular movement of life;<sup>1</sup> they are sown with a thousand eyes, to express that space is everywhere equally present to them; whilst the wings signify the life which moves freely on all sides.<sup>2</sup> But it is to be considered that in Ezekiel this Life and Motion of the Powers of life do not yet exhaust the description of the Theophany. All this, the cherubim with the living wheels, merely forms, so to speak, the chariot, the מְרִכְבָּה, the base for the living God. All this is the mere forecourt of the divine sphere,—the innermost circle is reserved for God as living Spirit.<sup>3</sup> If we approach from the side of the world, this heavenly fulness of life may already appear to be the Godhead or God. But later on, when we are in possession of the divine Personality, that fulness will be a predicate of God, a mere substratum, so to say, of His Personality. As absolute Life, He is absolutely exalted above passivity or diminution and transitoriness, as well as above increase; He has absolute Sufficiency in Himself, for He has Life in Himself.<sup>4</sup>

*Observation 1.*—May we, then, derive Omnipotence from the category of absolute Life? Of course, if Omnipotence simply means absolute Ability or Fulness of Strength. But mere fulness of strength does not make God omnipotent. Were He fulness of strength only, infinite power of life, He would be mere Potentiality, but not actual realized life. Or else, if very fulness of strength impelled Him to Self-realization, God would use His force by physical necessity, and He would not be free. His fulness would be a power above Him—His fate, as it were. Everything—the possibility of which lay in Him—would be realized blindly. Rather can we only call God Almighty, if He is master of Himself, and is Himself the power over His Nature or Force. Not, indeed, that He can be, or become, or do everything we may think. For to be able to desire the illogical or the non-divine would be no excellence, but a bad possibility eternally excluded from His idea. But God is only the Power over His own Power by being Spirit, to which we have not yet come (§ 26, etc.). If, on the

<sup>1</sup> As James also speaks of a τροχὸς ἐν τῇ γύρῳ, iii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> So strikingly von Hofmann.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. i. 26.

<sup>4</sup> John v. 26; comp. i. 3.

other hand, God were simply a living Nature, not being master of Himself, and therefore not being truly almighty, because He is not another than Himself, He might create, but He could only work Himself out and produce Himself by physical necessity. All Cosmogony would thus be Theogony. On the contrary, if His Nature is the servant of His Will, then, without prejudice to His original power or His Omnipotence, there will remain a place for a world, and that a free world, by virtue of which alone is reciprocal action possible between God and it, and in which the Law of Causation finds its perfection anew. God cannot, it is true, be limited from without, but can only be conditioned by Himself; but if He is Almighty, by virtue of His Omnipotence, and without limitation of it, He can freely determine to condition His action by causalities in the world He has formed, upon whom He bestows the possibility of free determination. A more thorough statement can only be admitted in the higher categories of the divine idea, and especially of the ethical attributes of God.

*Observation 2.*—The idea of God as absolute Life, if it were the highest possible statement respecting God, would not leave room for a separation between God and the world. Of itself life is still a physical category. If God is simply thought as All-Life, the consciousness of the world and that of God coalesce, as in the Indian religion. In order to obtain one single distinction, the world must be regarded as a Self-division or Manifestation of God, and God Himself must be thought as burdened with finitude,—all which contradicts His Absoluteness. The circle of natural life cannot be broken through by Nature, nor by God, if He is merely Nature.

2. Many Mystics and Theosophists speak in various fashions of a Nature, and even a Corporeity in God.<sup>1</sup> Thus Hamberger says: "God has no body, but a Corporeity in the sense of 1 Cor. xv. 45." So Schöberlein expatiates upon the essence of the spiritual Nature and Corporeity. According to Rothe,<sup>2</sup> God is as One Constituted an instrument for Himself, an Organ in relation to all besides, *natura not factura*, growing

<sup>1</sup> Thus Jak. Böhm, Oetinger, and his interpreter Hamberger, *Gott und seine Offenbarung*, 1839, p. 80. Schöberlein, *Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie*, 1861. Hamberger, *Andeutungen u. Gesch. u. Kritik des Begriffs der himmlischen Leiblichkeit*, idem, 1868. Similarly, St. Martin, Franz von Baader; Billroths *Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 66, 70. Erdmann, *Natur oder Schöpfung*, p. 84. Vatke, *Die menschliche Freiheit*, p. 237. Weiss, *Philos. Dogmatik*, I. pp. 466, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Rothe, *Theol. Ethik*, 1st edit. § 16.

from within outwards; still neither Materiality nor Succession in Time is given in that opinion. Weisse<sup>1</sup> denotes the Nature in God as the psychical or the Soul, which he also calls Son, the divine Nature; whilst Sengler understands by Nature in God the divine attributes constituted by the triune Essence. According to Vatke, God constitutes Himself human Nature, and has in that fact the presupposition of His Spiritual Being and Becoming. Calvin himself, although he was opposed to Servetus, says: *Fateor pie hoc posse dici, modo a pio animo proficiscatur: naturam esse Deum.* But properly speaking, he says, Nature is the divinely established created order, and it is a hard and dangerous mode of expression to interweave God in the circle of His works.<sup>2</sup> But it is one thing to call God Nature, and another thing to teach a nature in God, since in the latter case the physical Essence of God can be distinguished from the ethical. This all must do in a certain way, who maintain an objective distinction between the ethical attributes and the rest. Chalybäus appropriately says: "One cannot certainly suppose an eternal and self-dependent Matter; that would be the principle of Materialism and Deism (of an independence of God on the part of the world). But we should also hesitate to constitute God mere thought, because that would lead to idealistic Pantheism (Acosmism)."<sup>3</sup> He continues: "Therefore we should say, There exists externally a *materia prima*, but as the element in absolute Being itself co-existent with thought (the ideal) and real,—not as Matter beside God or in determinate form,—that is, as a corporeal world, but also not simply as matter thought, for that would be again a mere activity of thought, rather as the substantially psychical, as the basis of the divine Will." By such a view Materialism is overcome, for Matter is the thing determined, not as in Materialism the thing determining, and is also, nevertheless, no mere nullity, as Idealism would have it. The *prima materia* in God is thus to him simply the expression for the Realism in the idea of creation. Now, much as there is in these fundamental thoughts that is correct, as, for example, that our Matter is not to be immediately derived from a *natura*

<sup>1</sup> Weisse, *Philos. Dogmat.* I. pp. 466, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* I. 5. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Wissenschaftslehre*, pp. 110, 115. Similarly, Harms, p. 249.

belonging to the Essence of God ; still, even the distinction between a *materia prima* and *secunda* is insufficient. Granting there is a *materia* in God, a passivity in God cannot be conceded even to His *natura*. For the determinableness of the *natura* in God by His will, and its dependence upon Him, cannot possibly be regarded as a passiveness of that Nature, as if it urged into the unlimited, and was only brought within bounds by His will ;<sup>1</sup> the reflexive determining of the *natura* of God by His will is in harmony with His *natura*, and this will sets the *natura* in motion for its own aims according to its essence. Our Matter cannot at all events be so derived from a divine *materia prima*, that we might grant that God translates His *materia prima* into passivity, and changes that side of His Essence into the passive Matter which we know. It is very true that the theology of antiquity suffers from a Spiritualism, from which a Materialism, more diffused than formerly, is the recoil. The subjugation of that Materialism will depend upon these points: (1) That the Spirit is not governed by Matter ; (2) that Matter is not to be thought self-dependent as opposed to Spirit ; but (3) as compatible with Spirit, and capable by its appropriation of spiritual influence. In that way Matter serves Spirit, and is at the same time a gain to Spirit.<sup>2</sup> That which corresponds in God to our Matter, must at once serve its tendency to self-revealing, and be an adequate organ for the revealing will ; on the other hand, what is determined in God by God, must also be living and active in its own way, but, as we shall soon see in the case of the divine Justice, in its own order, so that the physical, absolute Livingness in God serves spiritual and ethical ends. What is correct in the Theologoumenon of a Nature in God is the opposition to idealistic and spiritualistic theories, is the interest of *Realism*, as Oetinger and Tobias Beck rightly assert, together with the equally biblical idea of "absolute Life," when it is developed and stated free from error. It is still, moreover, to be considered that in the definition "God is absolute Life," we have by no means a mere definition of form,—as Becoming, for example, would be,—but a fulness, an absolute *πλήρωμα* of

<sup>1</sup> As Schelling would have it in his *Philosophie der Mythologie*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Harms, *Einl. in die Physik*, 1866, p. 376, thinks Matter quite devoid of attributes.

divine energies; and the further question must now be asked, how the form of this absolute Life is to be thought more precisely, and whether these real forces in God are to be defined to be physical only, or also spiritual? Upon these points the other so-called arguments give the answer. We would likewise incorporate them, transformed, into the Whole we seek.

§ 22.—*The Physico-Teleological Moment of the Proof.*

The general idea of absolute Life is consummated, and defined in a more concrete manner, by the true element in the Physico-teleological proof, the importance of which consists in combining with the idea of God those ideas essential to rational thought of Measure, Adaptation, Harmony, and Beauty. Thus this argument will become the starting-point for defining the Absolute as living Measure, essential Harmony, and Beauty, and, if a world exists, as the principle of all this.

*Observation.*—The Chinese religion has stopped at God as Measure; the Roman thinks Him the principle of Adaptation; the Greek represents the divine as the Beautiful and the principle of all Beauty.

1. The customary form of our proof is this. "The universe, the All of Nature, is perfect and harmonious, and there lies therein both adaptation of means to ends and beauty. The order, the consonance between individual things and the whole, this intentional design of one thing for another, as, for example, of the eye for light, of the sun for the earth, which is contingent in things external to one another, and which cannot have given themselves that design, presupposes a First Cause who orders in an intelligent manner, and who has made the world according to the ideas of purpose and beauty. Kant objects to this, that the proof merely leads to an architect of the world, an arranger of the forms and relations of things, not to a creator of the material. But this charge exculpates itself, if the Physico-teleological proof does not



pretend to be a whole, but presupposes the Cosmological argument, according to which, if there is anything else but God, everything, and not form merely, must have its absolute basis in the absolute First Cause, who is the Cause of Himself. A further objection of Kant's, that this proof is only an Ontological proof concealed, must, so far as it is true, be rather welcome to us, as pointing to the correct form of the Physico-teleological argument. For, in fact, the Ontological thought, which combines necessary Being with the necessary concept, must be carried on by the Physico-teleological proof, so that the ideas, which form its contents, Measure and Adaptation, Harmony and Beauty, as they are necessarily thought, so they must be also shown to have a secure existence, and to be collateral with the absolute Essence.

2. The world of Nature is full of wonderful contrivances, and relations of disconnected things with one another, for the production of certain results, so that a *Theologia naturalis* may be projected with a collection of noteworthy instances of the designed and harmonious correlations of natural things.<sup>1</sup> Earth, sea, the atmosphere and meteorology, life in plants, animals, and men, present themselves for consideration and inquiry, in order to infer from them the Being and Attributes of God, indeed to erect Nature into a type of the spiritual and even the Christian. In fact, Nature does not fail to evoke in the uncorrupted heart profound and wide-reaching impressions of the kind mentioned.<sup>2</sup> These visible spheres contain luminous tracks in crowds, which transport into a supersensual world of ideal thought. Only a vapid and spiritless treatment of Nature regards the visible world as incapable of receiving and expressing the spiritual. Still, more than one thing is lacking to the cogency of the Physico-teleological proof of itself, both as regards *contents and form*. Adaptation or Harmony is not everywhere represented to us: with the means at our disposal

<sup>1</sup> To this class belong the Natural Theology of Reimarus; the Bridgewater Treatises; Zöckler, *Theologia Naturalis*, 1860; M'Cosh, *The Supernatural in relation to the Natural*, 1862. Not merely does von Hartmann, *Philos. des Unbewussten*, 5th edit. pp. 633, etc., acknowledge a Teleology in the world, although the existence of the world is itself not rational in his esteem, but even Materialism finds itself empirically necessitated to recognise a Teleology, of course side by side with a Dysteleology.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i. 18-21; Ps. civ. Compare also the Parables.

the induction is not to be perfectly established.<sup>1</sup> Then in the statement of what is to be regarded as Design, arbitrariness easily commingles. There is much seemingly purposeless working. What from one side appears to be display of design, is neutralized again by other forces; for example, fruit or seed is the purpose of plants, they are destroyed. We could of course conceive the idea of intermediate purposes, which, whilst they are on the one hand the aims of a process, are in turn—even by their destruction—means to a higher and more comprehensive purpose in ever ascending line. But Nature shows us no such all-embracing purpose upon which we could rely; it is rather a cycle of rising and setting. Even man himself, if he regards himself as the end of Nature, is devoured in turn by Her, who is his mother, and thus forms an instance against the Physico-teleological argument built on finite ends. Unless we attain to higher ends than natural, which give to all individual ends their measure and adaptation, the only course left is either to despair over the adaptation of means to ends in the arrangement of the world, or else to abide, without proof, by the *belief* that everything is purposely ordained. But the *form* also of the relation of Design is still incomplete in the Physico-teleological proof, because that proof is so constructed that means and end still lie apart from each other. The end is not in turn thought as means, and that in relation to what was the means, and the means is not in turn the end. So little is the relation of reciprocal action, the interpenetration of means and end, thought to be the true adaptation of means to end, that the separateness of the single things, which are nevertheless related to each other as means and end or designedly, and therefore the contingency of their combination and working, is rather the motive of the inference to an intelligent First Cause. But that is simply an incomplete form of the relation of design. The form is a higher one, in which the end is inherent in the means, and in which its means are not without itself, just as they are not dependent upon something not self-originated. As we saw earlier, a higher form

<sup>1</sup> According as they cultivate in a narrower or wider spirit the sphere which is supposed to be governed by Teleology, Naturalists may speak of Dysteleology or Teleology.

(§ 20) of the relation of causation is that of reciprocal action; so also the higher form of the relation of adaptation (and in this true form it must be ascribed to the divine Intelligence) is only reached when the universe, which the Godhead—absolute Life and absolute Intelligence—originates, is at the same time means and end, so that the real potentialities, which God possesses within Himself as absolute Life, minister to the ideas which the improved Physico-teleological argument can make valid. In fact, this higher form of adaptation is already presented in the world. The idea of *Organism* is just this relation of reciprocal action, this reciprocity of means and end. Life is the end which is self-originated; as originating it is soul, as originated it is organism. The thing placed (or product) is again life, whilst as organism or as means of life it is equally life or end unfolded. On the one hand, the organs are the means for the realizing and preservation of life, whilst they are on the other the presentation or development of life. Their unity, the organism, is the realized life itself; and the organs contain the organism, whilst the organism comprises them. The organism, which is means and end in interchange, answers, more completely than the *facta* to which the Physico-teleological proof is wont to recur, to the ideas of Measure, Adaptation, and Harmony. This proof should reflect, therefore, upon the organism in order to apply this most complete form of the relation of design to the inference to the existence of God. Yet even this more complete form does not allow an inference from the adaptation in Nature to God as the absolute Measure, the absolute Intelligence, Beauty, or Goodness. For one thing, all single organisms in the world pass away; thus their decay forms a contradiction to their being regarded simply as ends, endowed with adequate means for self-preservation. These means rather pass away with the ends, and thus absolute adaptation cannot be inferred from them and their relation. But even if we regard the whole of Nature as one organism, we cannot yet see an absolutely perfect thing in it, or draw inferences therefrom to absolute Wisdom. It is true Nature lasts long, although single things change; but it, too, has its history, its Becoming in Time, it is therefore no perfect work, and in its history all its forms change. If, therefore, there were absolutely no defect in the

self-presentation of life in single forms, why are the forms changed, why are the earlier taken back and exchanged anew with the past? This constitution of the world does not correspond with the idea of the perfect organism, in which there can be nothing superfluous or casual, too little or too much; this constitution is contrary to such an idea. Consequently, even when the Physico-teleological proof is applied, it cannot possibly lead to an absolute Intelligence, to Design, etc., *via causalitatis*. Finally, an absolute Intelligence distinct from the world is not to be thus reached. We might rather endeavour to regard the universe itself as a *ζῶον*, the single limbs of which are the spheres, and in which a harmony, design, and beauty are innate, so that it is not conscious with a sure, appropriate, and plastic impulse, and yet works intelligently according to an immanent Logic or Mathematics.<sup>1</sup>

The previous remarks have shown that the world reveals quite enough of Order, Design, and Beauty, enough of Intelligence and Goodness, for us to entertain the thought of the Physico-teleological proof, but reveals too little to reach far enough with the inference from effects to the cause,—namely, it reveals too little to arrive at God as the Principle of absolute Design, Order, and Beauty. That seems at first sight a defect; but regarded more closely, the lack becomes a good, and at any rate simply expresses the truth. The shortcoming, the imperfection of Nature, shows us that we cannot stop at the design and harmony appearing therein as at an absolute thing, and thus an elevation above the world is needed to reach the Absolute and Divine, which is free from contradiction, which Nature must acknowledge it is not. But still the world, as the entry upon the Physico-teleological proof itself shows, may contain so much, that it *urges to the conception of the idea of an absolute end*, of a perfect Harmony and Beauty. Let this idea be only conceived, and reason can no longer do otherwise than think<sup>2</sup> it a good of an inalienable kind, thus a necessary idea of the reason, and then combine that idea also with that of real absolute Life. And thus, interweaving the Ontological moment, but defining it more

<sup>1</sup> Compare von Hartmann, *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, which he endows with *clairvoyance* in relation to design

<sup>2</sup> Compare Trendelenburg, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2d edit. pp. 1-77.

accurately, we formulate the cogent part of its proof in this way:

"The ideas of Order and Measure, of Adaptation and Beauty, which are all moments of the idea of Harmony, are such valuable ideas that the reason, having once conceived them, cannot again disclaim them. These ideas are Reason, since reason bears these ideas within itself; and these are necessary ideas. Now the world, upon whose suggestion of course these ideas first come into consciousness, only presents them in an imperfect manner; therefore thought cannot rest content with the world, but only finds repose in the idea of the absolute and perfect Design, Beauty, and Harmony."

But this idea gained, and acknowledged to be essentially valuable, it cannot remain outside of the divine, outside of the absolute Life, which has been discovered to be necessary and necessarily existent. For we cannot have two Absolutes, an ideal and a real, which might have nothing to do with one another. But there is One Absolute. Therefore we must teach that—

### § 22b.

The Deity is the absolutely harmonious Life.

1. The *basis* of the regulative ideas united in the Physico-teleological argument is *Measure*. The knowledge of Measure is Mathematics, *Deo coeterna* (Kepler), *ὁ Θεὸς ἀριθμεῖ* (Gauss). But the unity of those regulative ideas of Measure, Design, and Beauty, is the idea of *Harmony*, Congruity. This congruity of the many upon the basis of measure may be twofold. A thing may either be a means for another thing, is not willed for its own sake, but only for that other thing, and in fitting correspondence therewith. That other thing is thus its measure; it cannot therefore be estimated according to itself, but only according to its relation to that other thing. We call such the *useful*, *that which is adapted to its purpose*; as Augustine already says: "The fitting, the useful, the convenient, depend on something else, cannot be judged of themselves, but only according to that relation to something

else." Or, a thing is willed for its own sake, so that there is a content, a repose in itself; for another thing is not its measure, it has its measure in itself, and through its proportionate, harmonious life is of itself beautiful.<sup>1</sup>

The Beautiful is then a peculiar totality self-supported, whilst the Useful is related to something else. All these definitions have indeed at this point, not possessing as yet the idea of spirit, a merely physical meaning. But if, now, the idea of Measure—of Design and Order, of Beauty and Harmony—has Ontological necessity, i.e. if it cannot be surrendered by the reason when once conceived at the suggestion of the world as Nature, and *a fortiori* is to be thought together with the necessary and existent absolute Essence (§§ 22, 23), a difficulty immediately rises: How is this idea to be thought of in connection with the absolute Essence? Is God the internal Measure of the Universe? Thus the ancient *Chinese* religion conceives Him. But if this is to be the definition of His Essence, it is a precipitate intermixture of the world. God must above all bear the Laws of Measure within Himself. Or is that which is adapted to its end to be regarded as the highest good? Is the useful to be honoured as the divine, as the *Roman* religion does, whose divine worship is a cult of beneficent and useful deities? But it is manifest that in this way we purely remain in the finite sphere, indeed in the sphere of self-interest, and that no foundation is offered for religious sacrifice. The divine would in that case be thought a mere means for man. Next akin it would be to think the divine as the self-dependent Beautiful, with the *Grecian* religion. But here a difficulty arises, which, if it does not underlie the sphere of the beautiful generally, yet underlies the beautiful in the Greek conception, a difficulty which is death to the Grecian religion. The idea of the beautiful seems to presuppose a corporeality and an aspect of appearance, seeing that it is the harmony of manifesting life; and there also seems to belong to harmony a plurality of heterogeneous

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Augustine, *Ep. ad Marcell.*, ed. Venet. ii. p. 538 [Migne's edit. vol. II. ep. cxxxviii. p. 527.—Tr.]: *pulchrum per se ipsum consideratur et laudatur*; it has also measure in itself. God, he says, is lovely as the beautiful, for we can only love the beautiful, but the truly beautiful is the supersensuous, is immutable truth.

things. How does that suit God? The answer is not difficult. The idea of beauty and harmony is not dependent upon a material. We may have in ourselves a purely spiritual image. The internal idea, the ideal of the artist, may be beautiful. Beauty is primarily and originally form, the primary form; and beauty does not arise from matter, but, like measure and order, is a principle of form, through the interworking of which in Nature, Nature is beautiful, and full of adaptation and proportion. This formative principle must also be capable of being fixed of itself in thought, and that too not merely as the law of the beautiful and harmonious *without* itself, but the peculiar reality of the absolute Essence must correspond with this Law, or the Law of the Beautiful, of Order and Harmony, must have absolute reality in the absolute Essence. And this we may assert with Augustine, who especially loves to think of God as the primary Beauty and Harmony, without introducing into God plurality and corporeity unallowably. For we have found in God (§ 21), as absolute Life, a pleroma of real potentialities of life, of which we must now say, therefore, that they have their form, their harmonious form, by virtue of the ideas of which the Physico-teleological argument treats. What, rightly understood, may be said of a Nature in God, may here serve in turn. *The absolute Life, we therefore say, is absolutely and essentially full of purpose in the fulness of its potentialities. It is not simply free from contradiction; the divine potencies of life are in harmonious equilibrium, the divine Life is essentially retrogressive Purpose, Self-purpose.* The divine Life, further, is essentially glorious, essentially forms a beautiful, eternal, and harmonious rhythm; and this primary Beauty typically presents Measure, the eternal order of the world (*εὐταξία*), the *perfect Organism*, and, if there is a world, the principle of all well-measured equiposes, of everything that displays design or use, of everything beautiful and *harmonious*, in a word, of everything that is *physically good in the world*.<sup>1</sup> The primary Forms of things, and the primary ideas of Adaptation and Beauty, must be in God.

2. The History of Religion in relation to these ideas. With the ideas discussed something of value is already gained;

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 31.

but the blending of the divine with the finite is not remote from any of these categories, by which a contradiction is assumed in the absolute Life in all these religions; and to this contradiction they and their world of deities succumb. They transfer, and mostly the Grecian religion, those ideas, in which there is a spark of the divine, from nature, and natural men, to the divine, so that the gods become ideal forms, which have stripped off the imperfections of the appearance of those ideas in the world of experience, and have built themselves an ideal world above the empirical. But at that point they could not rest. These gods are merely beautiful objects of Nature; the beautiful of this world of deities is only natural beauty. The spirit exists as a natural soul, so to speak, within the divine forms of the Hellenes. The *aims* of the deities are finite; thus their wisdom and happiness are the same. At the same time there is also a shattering plurality of gods, against which the rational consciousness of the unity of the Absolute reacts earlier or later. Further, whilst the Grecian gods are purely self-supporting and self-sufficient beautiful beings, the Roman religion, with its intelligence, although without poetry, represented the true element of the earnest mind that has an aim; only those ends should not remain merely finite, if that earnestness was not to become Egoism, and should not be merely opposed to the beautiful. The ideal lustre of the Beautiful must be united with the realistic moment of Design in the absolute Harmony. But the Grecian religion only possesses the former, and the Roman the latter. It is quite otherwise with the *Hebrew* religion. It assigns the definitions of the Physico-teleological argument their proper place positive and negative, and stands, besides, on a far higher level than the others. It is, it is true, often represented that its God is merely the absolutely exalted Essence, whose pure and self-identical Simplicity and Ideality is opposed to the world as a mere contingent phenomenon or as Nothing, and to man as a being who is mere dust and ashes. So even Hegel says. But that view is incorrect, as even the cosmogony shows.<sup>1</sup> The Old Testament especially praises God as the principle of number, measure, and weight, pre-eminently the Book of Job: "He gave the wind

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 31.



its weight, and to the water its certain measure." "Who has given to the earth its measure, and who has placed a level over it?" "He weighs the hills in a balance." "He has given the water its limit." "He has bound the bands of the Pleiades." "He leads out the army of stars by number."<sup>1</sup> Briefly, "His hand distributes measure."<sup>2</sup> And this the Book of Wisdom thus comprises: "Thou hast ordered everything by measure, number, and weight."<sup>3</sup> Considering the close connection between measure and that idea of righteousness so important in the Old Testament religion, it is no wonder that the Old Testament speaks so often of measure. Again, when the Jewish spirit degenerates, it is not far to an attachment to number, measure, and weight; the Israelite becomes the Canaanite, the Merchant.<sup>4</sup> This connection between righteousness and measure appears also in express passages, as, "A just weight and balance are the Lord's."<sup>5</sup> Whilst other religions do not commonly represent the origin of the world as conditioned by measure, or by purposes which require the application of the laws of measure, but simply inquire after those laws in the already existent world, in the Old Testament religion, the laws of measure, number, and weight have their eternal place in God, namely, in the *Wisdom*, which is at once the artist and inventor of the realized aims, which is, so to speak, the divine Phantasy, and which orders and balances all forces according to the measure of worth given by those aims. In the Proverbs, Wisdom says: "He possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before the world was founded. . . . When He laid the foundation of the earth, I was with Him as the architect, and had my delight daily, and played before Him all the time."<sup>6</sup> The "with Him" (עִמּוֹ) expresses, that the Wisdom is a new element, which is added to the Almighty (אֱלֹהִים), but which for all that stands in unity with Him.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Job xxviii. 25, xxxviii. 5, 10, 11; comp. Isa. xl. 12; Job xxvi. 10, xxxviii. 31, ix. 9; Prov. viii. 29; Isa. xl. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxiv. 17; Job xiv. 5, xxi. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Wisd. xi. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Comp. the prophet Hosea, and Löwe's treatise upon Hosea in Pelt's *Mitarbeiten*, 1840. The flight from his call also leads Jonah to a Phœnician merchantman.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xvi. 11, xx. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Prov. viii. 22-31; comp. Job xxxviii. 10, 11; Ps. civ. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Like the *αὐτός*, John i. 1, 2.

The idea also of design and the designed relationship of things to one another already enters clearly into the succession of creations in Gen. i.<sup>1</sup> Prophecy presents the same fact. Israel has the idea of Teleology as a kind of soul; its whole history advances to a goal, which is ever kept in view, and faith in that goal is demanded by this religion. The idea of beauty, one might think at a first glance, enters less into the Old Testament in relation to God, for the sake of necessary contrast to the natural religions and to the intermixture of sensuous ideas closely associated with that idea. Still the Psalmist speaks of the "beautiful radiance of God;" "Light is the garment Thou hast on;" "Jehovah is gloriously arrayed."<sup>2</sup> But, of course, whilst the Grecian religion lays the main stress upon beauty of form, and beholds in form itself the most excellent worth, to the Old Testament the beauty, the radiance, the array, the pomp, are but the *garment* of Jehovah. So that in this case also a distinction recurs between the innermost sanctuary in God and His manifestation, similar to that in the חיות, between the living beings and God Himself (§ 21, 1). That especially appears, too, in a characteristic expression, very frequent in the Old Testament, which so conceives the beauty in this very Essence, that there exists therein Sublimity, Transcendence; that expression is the "Glory of God," כבוד, נאמא, הוד וְקֶדֶר.<sup>3</sup> "I will speak of Thy glorious beautiful pomp." That vision closes:<sup>4</sup> "It was the view of the קֶדֶר, of the Glory of Jehovah," which Moses had desired to see, and it passed by him.<sup>5</sup> This Glory is, it is true, in the clouds,<sup>6</sup> but it wishes to become manifest: The God of Glory appeared to Abraham; the Glory descended upon Mount Sinai; it filled the House of the Lord.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, it will go forth over the heathen, as it has gone forth over Israel.<sup>8</sup> All the world shall become full of the Glory of the Lord.

But the Old Testament could only conceive God, as it does, as the Majestic and Glorious, because God is to it more than

<sup>1</sup> Ps. civ. 21; comp. Acts xiv. 14-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. civ. 1, cxlv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 18, 22; comp. Rev. xv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Acts vii. 2; Ex. xxiv. 16; 1 Kings viii. 11; Isa. vi.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xl. 5; Ezek. xxxix. 21; Num. xiv. 21; Isa. xxxv. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. l. 2, civ. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ezek. i. 28.

<sup>8</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 26.

mere natural beauty, and is superior to merely finite adaptation and natural good, and is, therefore, more than Nature and the Physico-teleological argument can show. In the Apis or Calf worship, which ruled in Egypt, and in Israel also, there is therefore a physical caricature of the living and creative Jehovah, because, in that worship, Jehovah has a mere *natural character*, even if His unity is preserved.

3. So long as we remain in the realm of natural design, or good, or beauty, and know nothing of an absolute purpose, there remains something inadequate to the absolute Life of God. Without spirituality the designed and beautiful is necessarily merely finite in value and manifestation. Polytheism and the confusion of the world with God so easily enter. In the world of the naturally beautiful and of finite adaptation or utility there is mutability, but nothing truly real. The world thought as a beautiful and sensuous organism has merely a fluctuating and changing reality, for every individual thing passes away, and yet it is only in this transitory individual that natural beauty is presented. And it is the same with the means and the ends in this sphere. A living activity is inseparably associated with the consumption, the exhaustion of force. In this ever repeated decay of what is made "good," in that restlessness of change, which drove the happiest nations to lamentation over life and to calling the dead fortunate, it is most precisely expressed that there is no perfection in this whole sphere.<sup>1</sup> The imperfection does not cling to the individual forms merely of natural life, but to the aims themselves, which, being finite and single, are inadequate to absolute Life, and cannot suffice it, so that this entire sphere would be a great riddle, a contradiction indeed, were it the final sphere. In that fact the necessity is already suggested for new and additional definitions. How, then, is the progress from the physical sphere to a higher one scientifically perfected? Not by development, nor by the derivation of the spiritual from the physical; on the contrary, by con-

<sup>1</sup> Related thereto is the weeping for the dead in the Syrian and partly in the Egyptian Religion. Greek poetry and prose also often praise death. But, at the same time, the Hellenic spirit inclines to recur to the Indian view of life, just as the enrichments of that idea of God, which appeared in its world of deities, also finally melt again without further advance into Oriental mysticism (Neoplatonism).

sidering more closely the transitoriness, the decay of merely finite purpose and mere natural beauty, and by attempting to make them square with the idea of Teleology already gained.

§ 23.—*Transition from the Physico-teleological Argument to the Idea of Right and to the Spiritual Sphere.*

There happens to finite nature as such simply what its name implies; in other words, it has its *right* (*Recht*), if it comes to an end without exception, whereby its essential difference from the Absolute comes to view and statement. But inasmuch as the finite also contains its worth within itself, by such annihilation *justice* (*Gerechtigkeit*) stands sharply opposed to natural beauty and natural good. The former is the death of the latter. The Measure which strives after design and beauty (§ 22*b*) is in contradiction with the Measure which constitutes the limits of every merely finite good.<sup>1</sup> This contradiction is only removed by the existence of something higher than the merely natural—*Spirit*, and by the natural as contrasted with the spirit entering into the mere position of medium. Only by the existence of this higher spiritual something do we have a right no longer tinged with contradiction (wrong), but real absolute Right.

1. It is no mere tragic accident that, without exception, every individual thing or every natural good passes away. It lies in the nature of the case. Mere natural good thus receives its right. The ends of the absolute Life cannot be merely finite; in the realm of the finite there is no repose, as if they were absolute; but the ideas of measure and order, as they

<sup>1</sup> This contradiction or riddle may lead to denial of God, or to denial of the power of God (as lately in the *Evangelium der armen Seele*), or finally to Dualism, which places an eternal bad or disturbing Being side by side with Good, whether side by side with God (as, for example, the philosophic doctrine of an inflexible and stubborn Matter would have it) or in God (into which category Schopenhauer and von Hartmann come with their opposition between intelligence and will).

radiate from the finite, must, on the other hand, return to the merely naturally beautiful and finitely designed, namely, to impart measure and purpose. It is the principle which guards limits, and preserves differences, the *ῥος*, by which everything is retained in its order or bounds. It is *Right*, and the order which establishes and guards the worth of everything, which is executed in the merely finite world by its passing away, in order that nothing should transgress its idea. And this boundary, Right, as the guardian of boundaries between different things, and first of all between finite and infinite, will show itself the turning-point leading from nature to spirit, and from the preceding attributes of God to the spiritual attributes. This is anticipated even in the heathen religions. The negative and destructive side of the Absolute as opposed to the finite is fixed in Moloch and in Siva of themselves. A still closer connection have the Erinnyes of Heraclitus, who oppose all *ὑβρις* of the finite, all arrogant exceeding of the idea.<sup>1</sup> This feature, little as it exhausts the idea of justice, is often recognised in the Old Testament. God humbles the proud.<sup>2</sup> The advance, then, from the physical definitions of God to the spiritual, from nature to spirit, this great step is taken by means of the idea of the *absolute End* (with which relative ends may be associated as transient media), and by means of the idea of *justice*.

2. Rational thought does not simply inquire into the commencement or the whence, into the First Cause of what exists, treated in the Cosmological argument. It no less inquires after the whither and the wherefore, after the *τέλος* or final cause. The idea of *τέλος* in general is aroused by the data emphasized by the Physico-teleological argument. It is as necessary, when once aroused, for rational thought to presuppose the final cause as to presuppose the real cause, just as that idea is a leading one in inquiries into Nature and in experiment.<sup>3</sup> It is true Spinoza is the opponent of all final causes, and, since his time, the more recent investigations into Nature are also frequently said to controvert Teleology. But,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. *Historia philosophia—ex fontium locis contexta* ed. H. Ritter et Preller, 3d edit. 1864, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. ii. 11, 17; comp. 2 Cor. x. 5; § 24, 4.

<sup>3</sup> For example, in reference to the human body.

as far as the latter is concerned, it is merely a reaction against a paltry and arbitrary misuse of Teleology; in reality, notwithstanding, where there is life, there is everywhere presupposed a designed relation of parts to the whole; where, for example, the function of an organ relatively to the whole is not known, there is a gap in knowledge, and thought is only content when it knows the purpose of the existence of that organ. Therefore, the most recent investigation of Nature once more recognises the idea of end, only it stops at finite Teleology, and therefore opposes to it a Dysteleology. The rationality of being coheres so closely with rational thought, that knowledge and wisdom would be impossible, if being were thought irrational, and were thought incoherent chaos, instead of being rationally ordered in itself. Knowledge is only possible upon the presupposition of capability of being known, *i.e.* upon the presupposition of the rational coherence, or briefly, of the rationality or Teleology of being.<sup>1</sup> More weighty is Spinoza's objection, which would regard Teleology as absolutely excluded, since it is a humiliation for the divine Being. For since, he thinks, the end or the final cause must be something good, and yet only has reality in the future, the absolute Essence on the supposition of an end would have something good without itself, would thus be imperfect, and would be implicated in time and evolution. Thus he will only concede efficient and not final causes, either for God or for the world which he identifies with God. But the objection is irrelevant. The idea of an end is not dependent upon an antecedence and posteriority of end and means. The end and the means for its production may very well coexist simultaneously in continuous living reproduction. By the fact that the divine self-originating Life is itself an end, there is by no means implied a becoming in time. But, as far as the world is concerned, were it identical with God, Teleology would certainly have to be denied. It has growth and history; what it has not yet attained is not yet actual; but nothing of this is applicable to the absolute Life. The only consequence is that the world must cease to have a history, *i.e.* to be a world, if it is to be identified with the absolute divine Life. If its reality is acknowledged, it is no contradiction as regards God to say

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Trendelenburg, *Log. Untersuchungen*.

that the ends which God eternally wills, are first realized in the world in time; rather with the willing of a world are these also willed, without God's becoming dependent or limited thereby. Thus we have to hold fast to the point that rational thought as such must issue in final causes or ideas of ends. Now the Physico-teleological argument brings ends before us relative to the sphere of the useful, the finitely good, and the beautiful, which are already of worth, but there is at the same time in these valuable objects transience and decay. As it is certainly not irrational, but rather logical and conformable to its idea, that everything merely physical and finite should pass away, the question irresistibly returns: Wherefore this mutation and change, however just it is in itself? Why are transience and change the only permanent things in Nature? The finiteness of what is of worth offers no explanation, for the question then is: "Why are good things so impotent, that change of form is the only thing permanent? Are not these valuable things made worthless and a mere sport by the fact that they are ever made simply to be annihilated?" We might, it is true, endeavour to think of all kinds of causes or ends for this interchange of origination and destruction, but we remain entrapped by riddles and contradictions so long as thought continues imprisoned in the world of Nature and of merely finite ends.<sup>1</sup> Wherefore do things perish, and why?

Shall we allow ourselves to be relegated to a *divine fate*, which inexorably annuls again everything of value after it has been made? In the ancient world the Chaldean, and partly the Syrian religion is fatalistic; and even in the background of the Hellenistic deities the *εἰμαρμένη* stands as the ultimate power even over Olympus. But the appeal to a Fate would not be a solution, it would be a repetition of the riddle. In Fate, as such, there is contained no motive, no rational ground, why a fact is thus and not otherwise; the fact is only stated a second time as inevitable. Fate, as such, is essentially empty, without sense and feeling, has no end in its decrees, but everything is of the same value to it as to its apparent opposite,

<sup>1</sup> Death and thought upon it is in the history of the human spirit a powerful force awakening reflection. Comp. Rosencranz, *Die Naturreligion*, 1831; Edm. Spiess, *Entwicklungsgeschichte d. Vorstellungen v. d. Zustand nach d. Tod*, 1877.

absolute chance and arbitrariness.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is itself chance that this and not that is determined by Fate. Fate is internally and of itself (or according to its *contents*) empty chance ; it only has necessity in reference to others ; it is thus only thought to be the principle of necessity according to its *form*. It makes the essentially and materially casual and worthless formally necessary. But it is thus the absolute depreciator of all ends and things, a contradiction between form and contents. But the finite, so far as it exists, has a certain value. There exists therein, although not in absolute fashion, design, and a ray of harmony and beauty. Though the universe is finite, it is better than non-existence, than empty nothing. Why does it perish notwithstanding ? There must be a better ground for the transience of the finite than that of Mephistopheles, "that what grows deserves to decay."

Is, then, possibly that better ground the preservation of *the universal*, or the *evidence of its power* over the individual ? So says Muhamedanism, inasmuch as Allah is its Fate, its absolute perfection of power, *supremum arbitrium*. The universal, especially when thought as absolute, is certainly justified in demonstrating its difference from the individual and particular by the decay of the latter and its own permanence, by the judgment which manifests that difference. And this is the true feature in the *Θείον φθονερὸν* of the ancients, which jealously opposed any transgression of the limits prescribed by the idea of a thing.<sup>2</sup> The divine Essence has necessary Solity, and cannot logically suffer another thing to be or appear to be its equal. But to wish to prove power and strength by mere destruction, without substituting something better, as is seen in the worship of Moloch or Siva, would be futile, and would lead to a cultus of evil and inimical powers. An internal contradiction is also connected therewith. For if the revelation of the sole power of God is really assumed to be the highest end of revelation, that end is far more seen in creative action than in destruction. If the con-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Trendelenburg, *Beiträge*, II. pp. 112-188 ; *Nothwendigkeit und Freiheit in der griech. Philosophie*, 1855.

<sup>2</sup> The truth of this is recognised by the Old Testament in the "jealousy" of Jehovah, who will not give His honour to another. Comp. Ps. cii. 26, 27, xc.; Isa. xl. 6, 7 ; 1 Tim. vi. 16.



suming force always needs the creative force which affords the material, the former is dependent upon the latter. But if we combine both, the creative and the destructive force, as the Brahman religion does with its Vishnu and Siva, uniting them in the divine unity, Trimurti (instead of stopping, as the Persian religion does, at a dualism of friendly and inimical powers), how can the divine, without self-contradiction, succeed in placing what it has in turn simply to destroy? A Deity which, in order to prove its Solity, is ever retracting in ceaseless alternation what it has placed, and remaking what it has annulled, would be in self-contradiction. Thus the mere *demonstration of power* cannot possibly avail as the end by which we can abide. Indeed, in such a case, God would be so far from being the absolute Power, that He would be fettered in turn by a Fate, by a physical law, which would compel Him to work without aim, and to sacrifice to an absolutely worthless sport deposits of real if finite ends. But reason must say, that an end, such as the ends of Nature and such as natural beauty, although finite, is more than mere blind force or chance. Although, therefore, the mere finite may obtain its right by coming to an end, the destroying power of the absolute Life would still be a riddle and a contradiction; it would not be a pure and absolute right if it merely destroyed, in order to create the same thing again in meaningless change. *We cannot rest satisfied with an empty sport which has neither sense nor aim*, and which impels the absolute Life. It is therefore not to be wondered at that the ancient religions, which fix the gaze upon this constant change of natural life, as for example in the change of the seasons, like the Egyptian, the Syrian, and the Phrygian religions, either end in absolute enigma, like the Egyptian which Hegel calls the religion of enigma, or sink into an intoxication, an ecstasy, like the Phrygian, in which rational existence is abandoned for phrenzy. Not to introduce an opposed and contradictory Activity or Being into the unity of the Absolute, philosophers and religious systems have pursued quite another path. The knowledge of the enigma, namely, of the contradiction in the incompatibility of those opposites, creating and destroying, life and decay, given in experience, is the point of origin for the *dualistic religions and systems*. Those religions and systems

can at any rate make both the original powers with which they deal, fixed ends, and ends answering to each of them, instead of ascribing contradictory self-annihilating ends to one and the same Being. The statement is then made: "There is, as the world shows, a higher and good Power with corresponding good purposes: without attributing something unworthy, there cannot be ascribed to that Power the evil and the bad there is in the world: side by side with that Power an inimical and wicked Power must be acknowledged, which opposes the good Power, destroys its purposes, and is at any rate partly unconquerable by the good Power."<sup>1</sup> This hypothesis of Dualism has found expression in the Slav and Celtic religions as well as in the Persian, the former of which, and especially the Celtic, fix their attention upon the *evil in the world*, upon what is noxious, chaotic, and inharmonious, whilst the Persian, a heathen prelude to the Hebrew, already sees *moral evil* or wickedness. That the world of the good and the bad is divided into two empires, is a step in advance as compared with a point of view which transfers that opposition without more ado to one and the same divinity, who is thus good and bad indifferently. Dualism, by its twofold empire, can allow a place to choice and freedom, although it is accepted as an inevitable fact or fate that two powers are opposed to each other which are absolutely opposite. But, on the other hand, the Dualism of two such Powers contradicts the Absoluteness of the divine Essence itself, from which the Unity and Solity of that Being flow, contradicts the full reality of the Deity who becomes limited and finite by such a dualism. Thus this path is also closed.

The result of all this is—that the search after an end which is free from contradiction should not be abandoned. That end is only to be found, not in ends merely finite in value and power, not in transitory ends, but in a higher or absolute end, which asserts itself even in this change of the finite, and which, because it is absolutely and essentially worthy, is no longer inadequately related to the Absoluteness of the divine; indeed, with that end even the making of the transient into its medium

<sup>1</sup> In addition to Bayle, Stuart Mill has in recent times defended this hypothesis. Because of the evil in the world he denies the omnipotence of the gracious God.

harmonizes. The change, the transience, the consumption of the finite is not irrational, since it serves some permanent purpose, something higher than the finite, and thus serves an infinite end.

3. That higher end, superior to Nature, and therefore supernatural, is *spirit*. The spiritual sphere only is the solution of the riddle, which always confronts rational thought in the consideration of natural life of itself. Nature remains a contradiction to the reason which is in search of a final cause, unless there is a higher sphere than the natural, unless Nature is broken through by the spiritual sphere, and by that means growth as well as decay, the consumption of the finitely purposed as well as the progressive renewal under new forms of what has been consumed, be justified and established. In that way, what was previously an end, although a finite one, enters into a greater coherence, into relation with a higher existence, with which it is incorporated as a medium. The riddle of Theodicy in its relation to Nature will then be capable of solution, if there is a higher world than the merely finite, a world in the power and amplitude of which every transformation, the negation of everything finite and its new creation, is fulfilled, and which itself claims to be the absolute end, to which everything else, all finite good ends, are subordinate and partial. By that fact the idea of *justice* is also satisfied, and that idea is definitely thought as absolute Justice which must belong to the divine Being. The absolute Life, which demands a rational consideration, must not have merely the right of the "stronger," which would nevertheless be no true right, nor may it have a mere relative right and relative wrong, as would be the case if there were only this finite world. It must rather include absolute right, Justice. It must be directed to absolute ends, and not merely those finite ones; and maintaining these it is just, even if it allow finite ends to change, and in willing them limits their duration and assigns them their position, just as the absolute end requires. With the spiritual a good is given, the promotion and defence of which is absolutely demanded, so that thereby God is pure Justice, perfect Right, there is no partial wrong in Him. This aspect we shall soon consider more closely. Here we have first to linger a while longer at the sphere of the spiritual in general thus won.

*Observation.*—In this way Dualism is avoidable, without extinguishing the distinction between the good and not good, and at the same time of worth and non-worth. A semblance or a misunderstood sound of justice is latent in that religion, which was from early times the neighbour of the Hebrew. The worship of the king of Heaven, מלך (Moloch), in which the primitive god of the Semites, *El Elyon*, Chon,<sup>1</sup> is blended with Kronos, with Saturn, who swallows his children, regards the divine as a jealous power of nature. That view is, according to Oehler's appropriate expression, the distortion of Jehovah on the negative side.

4. The absolute Being, or *the Godhead*, is *Spirit*. The idea of the absolute and only Life can, in the midst of the finite world, and of the ideas which that world partly suggests and partly fails to realize, only be maintained if spirit exists, and if there is thus an absolutely worthy end eternally attained, and having a secure existence in the midst of the transitory. Rational thought only finds a point of rest by a non-arbitrary exaltation above the visible; that with which the exaltation has to do is, therefore, first of all, immaterial and non-transitory Being, and so far already Spirit.<sup>2</sup> But in the connection in which we use the word, Spirit also expresses something positive, a peculiar Being transcending Nature and its categories, which is not merely in degree of higher worth than all finite good things, but which is also the absolute final end. In this higher something, or in God as Spirit, the principles will be found of all those ideas of which the world forms the mere finite manifestation or type, the principles of Measure, Design, and Order, of Beauty and Harmony. God, as Spirit, is the original seat of the "eternal truths;" they have in Him their absolute being. They have not first originated in a will; they are rather eternally true in themselves; but they are nevertheless not a Power or Fate superior to God, for He is also their absolute Being. They are eternally contained within the circumference of His Essence, namely, as the Primary Spirit. These categories already presuppose a divine *Intelligence*, an Understanding, in which the eternal truths of Logic, Mathematics, and *Æsthetics* are present as essential

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Movers, *Die Religion der Phönicië*.

<sup>2</sup> John iv. 24; Heb. xi. 3; comp. § 19.

powers, so to speak, pertaining to the divine *Nature*, already defined to be spiritual. Ends, whether finite or absolute, do not exist apart from intelligence; nor does beauty or order. In like manner, when we were speaking of the absolute Life of God and His power, we were also indirectly pointed to Spirit, for we saw that God would not be absolutely mighty, His power would be a might above Him, if He were necessitated to reveal that power as it is, if He were not rather the power above His own power, and if that power were not beneath His own control (§ 21). But such power, again, can only be found in spirit, which is not merely pure and infinite being; nor is it, on the other hand, merely absolute ability, but which has itself under control. or has power over its ability, and is thus free. The same result follows from the following consideration which attaches to the Ontological argument. Spirit, reason itself, lies nearer to the awakened reason than Nature does, and from the idea of *Knowledge* the spirituality of absolute Being already results. For how can absolute Being, which is to be necessarily thought as the real and original possibility both of what exists or of being and of thought and knowledge, be such a possibility if it is not essentially spiritual? But further, Spirit or Rationality is essentially Consciousness and Will, and both in unity. Still the various aspects of Spirit and their explication will be afforded us step by step in what follows. The first thing in the spiritual sphere by means of which this sphere is shut off from the mere finite and natural, is justice.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [It will be noted by the reader that Dorner uses this word *Gerechtigkeit*—*justice, justness, rightness, righteousness*—in a more extended sense than is common in English. His *gerecht* is equivalent to the Latin *justus*. An occasional mental substitution of *rightness* for justice will prevent wrong associations, and will preserve the connection between his *Recht* (right) and his *Gerechtigkeit*. The word is equivalent to the Old Testament idea of *Righteousness*, and *righteousness* may be occasionally substituted by the reader. For the sake of several curious turns of thought, the same word has been retained throughout this section and context, and the German synonyms of *just* and *justice* are invariably *gerecht* and *Gerechtigkeit*, and *vice versa*. It may not be unadvisable to add that *Recht*, which has been almost invariably translated by *right*, is also used for the product of right which we call *law*.—Tr.]

§ 24.—*The Juridical Argument and absolute Justice.*

The Deity is to be defined as absolute Justice. Justice is the Self-preserving Honour of God as the absolute, the ideal, and the actuating norm and guard of all worthy bestowal (*der absoluten, idealen und real-energischen Norm und Hut aller Werthgebung*).

1. The Juridical argument has been less elaborated than the preceding arguments, a circumstance which may possibly be connected with the neglect which the idea of justice has proportionately experienced in Theology, the difficulty of that idea just consisting in being intermediate between the natural and the spiritual, or in having its roots in the natural world, and thus having, so to speak, typical manifestations of itself in the realm of measure and order on the one hand, and on the other in taking hold of the absolute and spiritual sphere. As the earliest, that Kantian position of the necessity of a happiness proportionate to moral worth might pass for a juridical argument. In that position Kant does not infer, as it is sought to do in the Physico-theological argument, from the perfecting of the world (and thus in this case from the perfect existence of right in the world), an absolute, just Causality, but, with more correctness, he allows the reason to be moved by the unsatisfying constitution of the world to conceive the idea of right and to postulate a Judge, who brings happiness and virtue into right relations. But apart from the fact that what is positively moral enters precipitately into that position, happiness and virtue are opposed to each other in too external a manner. Purist as Kant otherwise is, and indifferent and coy towards the physical, he nevertheless overlooks here that true virtue already possesses in itself a happiness which vice lacks, that the virtuous man does not think upon how to have a just claim to external happiness, or how to assert that claim. Instead of the Kantian method, another path of demonstration has been already prepared in what precedes, and to that path we now proceed.

2. We have seen generally, in § 23, that the solution of the enigmas which are always present in the sphere of natural

life can only be found in the sphere of the spirit. To that sphere the rationally necessary idea of the end pointed which was to be thought absolute, unless we thought of the interchange of birth and decay as something illogical, and its rightness as partly wrongness. Only if there is an absolute End, can there also be absolute Justice. How, then, is the relation between absolute end and absolute justice to be thought? Both already belong to the sphere of spirit. The conception of the idea of justice is the decisive step which conducts into the realm of spirit as a whole, which is no longer a mere means or finite end, but the end of everything else; and this step is already of itself a self-affirmation of spirit. He who acknowledges the idea of justice already affirms spirit. But we must first cultivate this sphere of spirit. And the first step is to apprehend that absolute end and absolute justice are so related to each other that *absolute Justice is already itself an absolute End*, is the contents of that end. To apprehend this, let us consider its idea more closely.

First of all, in order not to rely upon the advance to a world which we have not yet reached, we have to avail ourselves of the Ontological thought which guarantees the absolute being of the idea necessarily thought, and to apply that thought to the idea of justice. We say, then: The idea of right, when once it has been conceived upon positive or negative suggestion, cannot be again surrendered by the reason; it is a necessary idea of the reason, which cannot fail of existence in the Absolute, and of absolutely perfect existence therein. But the same absolute Justice must also be acknowledged to be a good thing in itself, an essentially and absolutely worthy end in itself. Being a thing which is always its own motive power, it is itself of a spiritual kind. In right itself there is a good of infinite importance; what is just is more than all mere finite worth. It is in this point like the beautiful, since it is not praised for another's sake, like the designed and the useful, but is praised for its own sake. It is its own end, but, unlike natural beauty, it is not an end of a finite kind. Absolute right is so good a thing in itself, and so legitimate as contrasted with everything else, that the phrase has its truth, "*fiat justitia, pereat mundus*," namely, it is true, if the world, in its finite worth, were only to exist in order to negative

right, which is absolute worth. Thus neither a mere subjective nor a mere empirical origin attaches to right.

The idea of right is, *in the first place, no mere subjective idea*; it is neither a matter of a human mode of view nor a mere work of human liking, agreement, or convention, so that it is purely a matter of human choice to form right. Rather, however great the share which is left to men in political law-making, they are certainly themselves conscious that they may not proceed arbitrarily in law-making, but that such law-making, the more successful it is, the more the law-making subjects surrender themselves to be organs of the idea of right—organs which do not make right, but are absorbed in the reason and necessity of the fact, which seek right and “find” it, in order to conform the current positive idea, where necessary, to its idea. Therefore jurists speak of a derivation of law, namely, from the reason of the case. Thus law has an objective side by which it is lord of men, but man is not lord of law. Every agreement or convention, at which liking may have its place in reference to individual things, is preceded by the objective right, which provides a basis for the obligation to keep the convention, so that a law which results from convention must acknowledge that it only has its power by virtue of a right which is *a priori*, which precedes the convention, and is not derived from it. Thus it stands with *legislation* relatively to the justice of society (*justitia commutativa*). So must law-giving activity generally *find* what is right. But the case is similar with *judicial* justice, and *executive* justice generally. It does not depend upon its predilection whether or not it judges of that which falls within its sphere, but the very carrying out of the law is really based upon lawful necessity. Law (or right) has of course a still wider significance than for the State. The State is not the administrator of the whole law, *e.g.* of the family, of the Church, etc.

That right also does not, *in the second place*, arise simply from the *contingent experience* of just acts or regulations, but is an idea of the reason, is especially to be known from this consideration, that the consciousness of the just and the unjust does not arise, in most living form, where the reality continues in a measured and orderly course, but arises just where that reality is opposed to what is right.



But since, now, right and justice are necessary ideas of the reason, and something absolutely worthy is expressed thereby, they are also to be predicated of the divine Essence; and just with the fact that right has its original place in God, is its objectivity truly secured. But here a difficulty comes in. It might appear that there can only be a mention of justice if there is a world, but that justice cannot have a meaning for the divine Life in itself. For justice, thinks Aristotle,<sup>1</sup> is a relation to another, and no one can do wrong to himself,—which is the same as saying that no one can be just in relation to himself. And thus many recent writers have also defined justice as a mere transient attribute of God, which is as much as to say that God is not just in Himself and apart from the world, but is only just in His action in and upon the world. But if in the just action of God there is not revealed an internal and immanent justice, there would not be necessity in this just action: it would simply be arbitrary action, because it would not have its roots in the divine Essence; and thus, again, the concept of justice would become something subjective, it would be based in our mental representation, which is pressed upon us, although contingently, and thus the idea of objective right would itself vanish. But Right belongs to the eternal truths as well as Mathematics and Logic, and those truths are maintained by God Himself, indeed they are united with His Essence.<sup>2</sup> If, as Aristotle thinks, there can only be a mention of justice when a plurality of moral subjects are opposed to each other, we must say that right is only born with that plurality as the rule of their reciprocal relation, discovering itself in laws and obligations. There is therefore in the individual person of himself nothing of right and justice; but right is only, so to speak, a posthumous child, a product of the self-arranged relation of free beings. In that case, convention or liking might be designated the father of right; whilst even the Hellenic religion makes Zeus the father of *Δίκη*, and places her as a guardian near her father's throne.<sup>3</sup> But if right and justice have no hold upon the divine throne itself, right itself remains eternally

<sup>1</sup> *Eth. Nicomach.* v. 3.

<sup>2</sup> § 23, 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Comp. Pa.* lxxxix. 15, xcvii. 2. Righteousness and Judgment are the fortress of His throne.

suspended in the air like a phantom; it may be the contrivance of empiricism, or of the subjective reason. Of course the rich unfolding of right is first found in the developed relations of the world, is first found in the society of legal persons. But right and justice can only be more in society than bare convention, if every person brings at least the germinal idea of right as a dowry in order to the foundation of legal communities, and if this idea pre-exists before legal persons. As not simply useful, but of absolute value and necessity in itself, right must therefore have its seat at the highest place in the absolute and divine Life itself. There is a right under heaven and amongst men and States, for this simple reason, that there is a right in heaven and in the very sphere of the divine. As, then, mention may be made of justice in that divine sphere, something further may be gained when we have striven after a more intimate definition of the concept of justice in general. We first consider that concept generally, and then its application to the concept of Deity.

3. Amongst all the more elevated nations of antiquity, justice is the highest moral idea. It was so with the Greeks and Romans, and especially with the Hebrews. It is the ultimate cardinal virtue; according to Plato, it is the soul which dwells in and unites all parts of the body politic—of that greater man. If we analyse this idea, that is just which accords with right (*צדק*), which has an objective existence, and justice is a mode of being or action in conformity with that objective right. The concept contains—(1) an objective right as norm or law, which claims validity unconditionally, and which is obligatory and inviolable; (2) a subject for whom this norm is valid, and who is submitted or subjected to it; (3) if, then, that which should correspond to the unconditioned norm is commensurate therewith, it is right or just, justice is realized. It may still remain undecided in such a view whether the norm has the character of positivity, or whether it lies unwritten in the heart or in things, in their essence and idea. We turn our immediate attention to the first point merely, to the *unconditional norm*. For the first step towards knowing what justice is, is to know that the objective norm holds good. In the Old Testament, where

justice (*Zedakah*) is straightness, this noun is especially represented under the image of a straight line, of an invariable and immovably similar rule or level.<sup>1</sup> Whilst the crooked is the self-unlike, the uncertain and the variable (and therefore unadapted for secure apprehension of what is straight, or the reverse); the straight is, on the other hand, the measure whereby both the straight and the crooked can be measured. Hence it may be seen how the idea of right and justice coincides with the mathematical and logical idea of correctness, although the former idea does not originate in the latter. It is similar with the idea of measure. The mathematical and logical laws are already objective and inflexible, although the subject who thinks or handles them may contradict them at his peril. This inflexibility of a mathematical and logical kind assumes to itself and acknowledges objective right, for it is just for each thing to be treated according to its idea as what it is, *i.e.* logically. Its idea is also its measure; and it would be unjust for it to be treated according to another idea than its own. Thus, for example, a falsehood is unjust, and indeed in such a way that it is illogical to apply speech, which, according to its idea, should be a revelation of something within, for the purpose of concealment, indeed for the opposite of its idea. The embezzling of goods in trust is unjust, because illogical. For it is illogical to say by deed that the goods entrusted by another are not another's, but the property of the embezzler. Both instances are practically as much as to say that A is not A. It is unjust to make the practical attempt to subvert the Logic of the world. Therefore it is said, "Right must still be right."<sup>2</sup> Man's wrong, though it may sway long, can never make itself right; that is an internal impossibility. By virtue of this close connection between justice and Mathematics and Logic, it is so natural for the Old Testament to call injustice folly. It is so essentially, and not merely by virtue of its leading to disappointment. In one aspect justice is Logic and Mathematics applied to the world of volition, and in this very fact lies the proof of its no mere subjective character. Its demands contain a logical and mathematical

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxviii. 17; Ps. xlv. 6: "Thy sceptre is a straight sceptre."

<sup>2</sup> The Tübingen jurist Schrader has written a dissertation upon the coherence of Mathematics and Jurisprudence.

necessity, *i.e.* the necessity that the will as well as the understanding must act according to the Logic of things, and direct itself according to the measure placed upon everything. But the idea of justice is not yet *exhausted*. Merely logical action would be nothing more than intelligent or prudent action. If the norm of Logic and Mathematics merely were infringed, that infringement would be unintelligent and objectively a perversion, an untruth, but wrong or injustice would not be exhaustively described. The norm of justice, precisely because it occupies a higher sphere than the natural, namely, that of spirit, embraces something higher than the mere right of Logic or Measure, or than bare attention to mere lasting uses, namely, an inviolable holiness, which demands a subjective awe of infraction, as the Romans already express it, by distinguishing between *Jus* and *Injustum*, and *Fas* and *Nefas*. And similarly we perceive in the Old Testament, in the religion of the Law, that "holiness" is the more ancient and rich idea, whilst that of justice only attains at a later date to vigorous development, and that from the idea of holiness.

Whence comes, then, the norm of justice, that high, that unique, dignity and holiness? This question will lead us further. Justice does not get its norm from its origin as such, for the logical is also from God, but in this way, that the absolutely highest, *the absolutely worthy or holy End*, is represented by it. It is for the sake of these *contents*, which the norm of justice represents, and which has to guard energetically against downfall, that justice has finally its whole and sole necessity and inviolability. And we thus again arrive at the fact that the idea of absolute justice is only established by higher ends, which are more than finite and natural, and are absolutely worthy and spiritual, which it administers, but to which the relative and finite ends may be filiated.

*Observation.*—The idea of right, and of formal right first of all, is of course already in itself an absolutely worthy idea, just for this reason, that it represents contents which are superior to things natural, to mere finite worth, and indeed to mere Logic and Mathematics, and thus that it represents spiritual contents, as, for example, individual right exists in the ultimate resort for the sake of a spirit, a person. The

sphere of the spirit dare not assume, it is true, an arbitrary or indifferent position as regards nature and its injunctions; still it is not ruled by Nature and its things of finite worth, but the spirit imprints its stamp upon Nature as its material, absolutely excludes co-ordination and subordination in relation to the natural, demands the subordination of the natural to the spiritual, associates the natural with itself, and thus first gives to it a sure participation in itself. Thus the natural receives its *right*. For it must confess to its merely relative worth, or that it only attains its order and unity in its plurality, in passive relation to the spiritual and its things of absolute worth.

Instead of acknowledging the self-sufficiency of the natural, which does not exist, because Nature does not include absolute ends, justice effects the necessary subordination, and by means of the spiritual vindicates the determinateness of the natural as one aspect of the natural. Its applicability and utility for the purposes of the spirit constitute its value and its truth. Thus the true idea of Nature, and of everything physical, is first given by the spirit, which apprehends and vindicates its relation of service to the spirit. But, again, the spirit cannot reach or realize the true idea of itself, unless it fix and elaborate the idea of the positive absolute End as of an end to be guarded by justice, because absolutely worthy.

4. *The Divine Justice*.—That justice, because it cannot be a mere subjective representation but is an idea of the reason which expresses an essential good, cannot fall without the divine Life, and that it must have its original and eternal place in God, has been shown. But *how is it possible to think of God as already just in Himself even apart from the world?* Shall we say that the idea of the world is in God eternally, and that God is just by His relation to that idea? That would again be to make justice not original in God, and not the foundation for the idea of the world itself, since God would only be just in relation to that idea. Besides, the relation to the mere idea of the world would be a mere ideal relation, and not real justice. We must therefore endeavour to apprehend God as just in Himself, or in relation to Himself, and apart from the idea of the world, or apart from the world. And without regard to Scripture, it may encourage us that Plato, swerving from Aristotle, is far removed from making justice a mere relation to others. He also acknowledges a justice in relation to oneself, in the case of individuals, as well

as of the State—the “greater man.” Indeed, this internal justice is to him the source of the transeunt justice. This view he is able to substantiate in relation to man by virtue of his Trichotomy. He is just in himself who allows the body, the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ , and the reason,—every part,—to obtain its own. But in such a statement nothing is directly said about God, just as Plato does not enter upon that theme. The idea of justice at any rate presupposes a duality, and so, in order to be the original seat of justice, God cannot be thought as *abstract Simplicity*, but only as distinct in Himself. But God is not to be thought as abstractly Simple; that point has already become clear to us by the divine Self-origination, and further, inasmuch as we are compelled to see in God the fulness of infinite living potentialities. Especially have we found in the necessity of the transition to spirit the difference between physical and spiritual definitions generally; the distinction between volition and knowledge is in the spiritual, of which distinction we shall have to speak with more minuteness further on. Thus a statement may be already made,—How it is possible for God to be absolutely just. The opinion that everything in God is of identical value, that nothing is superordinate and nothing subordinate, threatens the distinction between the physical, *e.g.* the divine power, and the spiritual; or it proceeds as if the distinction between the physical and the spiritual or ethical were merely subjective, and not given in the objective Essence of God. We therefore say that there is in God the norm defining the value of what is diverse, the norm of truth, which must be given, not as external or superior to God, but in Him and in His Essence, of which the norm may also consist. This is the *analogon* of the *justitia legislativa* in God. But there is also in God a standard of judgment in conformity with this norm, and relating to the distinctions in His Essence, especially to the distinction of the physical and spiritual categories, that is to say, the archetype, so to speak, of the *justitia judicialis*. Finally, God is just in Himself, seeing that He thinks and wills every single thing in Himself according to its value; that He gives and maintains its right, just, and harmonious position to each of the distinctions in Himself. This proposition may appear unimportant and self-evident; but there lies therein the important point,

that there is in God neither chance nor a levelling indifference, that there is in Him, who ever corresponds with the absolutely good norm He is and thinks, no "shadow" even of "confusion," after the fashion of the dualistic religions,<sup>1</sup> or after the fashion of those who subordinate the divine Justice to the divine Perfection of Power. By virtue of His perfect Power, or His absolute Will, God cannot, for example, be eternally reconciled to wrong or evil. In addition, therefore, to the earlier definitions of eurhythmy and harmony in the divine Life, we now acquire, in the divine *Justice*, the more definite principle of the order in the divine Being and Life, and the true law of that order. Everything in God accords with that Justice which knows, wills, and preserves everything after its kind, and pre-eminently so His Life, His Nature, and His Fullness of Might, as the servants of the spiritual, of the higher worth. There is thus also in God a subordination and a superordination by virtue of His Justice, which penetrates the whole divine Life, and is unalterable. This super- and sub-ordination are not excluded by the divine Self-identity and Immutability. God is like Himself, not as One who makes everything alike that is in Himself, but as a just God, who recognises and wills everything in its variety and order. Thus a sub- and super-ordination is straightway included in His immutable and self-identical Justice.

But, inasmuch as God is the absolute Justice, both as the primary law of that justice, even as He is the consciousness which asserts that law, and the absolute realization of that norm, He desires and asserts Himself to be distinct from everything else possible and actual. There is in Him that *zeal of Self-preservation*, which tolerates no loss of Himself, no commingling, no self-defection (no ecstasy of love even) with another. Absolute right or the absolute norm of justice cannot be broken even by God Himself, for He is Himself that inflexible norm of truth, and must deny His Essence, if He violated that norm. And as He is Himself that norm, He is equally the energetic Will which effectuates and establishes that norm, and therefore Himself; or He is also real justice, and thus the safeguard both of absolute right and of everything in Himself included in that right, the safeguard, that

<sup>1</sup> Jas. i. 17.

is to say, of His own Majesty and Solity. For it would be unjust as well as untrue, if God ever regarded anything without Himself as His equal. Inflexible right would itself be jeopardized by such a confusion of God with another who was not God. Therefore it is so often said in the Old Testament, that God jealously guards and asserts His Honour.<sup>1</sup> God is a strong and a jealous God.<sup>2</sup> This jealousy for His Honour is not the heathen *Θείον φθονερόν*, but, if there is a world, is opposed to the self-exaltation of the creature; His "Honour" and "Majesty," His "Name," mean His holy and just Being, as it must will to be regarded.<sup>3</sup> And Jehovah is not merely just as a matter of fact in His Being or Action; He consciously does what is just, and He wills it as what is just. He loves right.<sup>4</sup>

5. But finally, *if a world exists*, its constitution is not indifferent to God as the just God, but there is an internal necessity that He should know that the same righteousness which is in Him—indeed, which is He, is effective in the world. The Justice of God is accordingly already *legislatively* effective in the production of a world; not merely inasmuch as He already incorporates Measure and Order in Nature by virtue of creative wisdom,<sup>5</sup> and inasmuch as He assigns to everything the share of reality which belongs to it according to its idea (*sum cuique* by virtue of His *justitia distributiva*, proportionately to the rank which is determined for it in the divine Thought and Will, in the ideal universe), but also, inasmuch as He so associates what is lower with what is higher, that it occupies the position of a means. And yet further, God desires, when He wills a world, not merely an involuntary regulation of the world by His just will, as the ultimate law of its being and its order; He also desires, by virtue of His love of justice, that His desire and love of justice should exist in the world, that there should exist in free spirits without Himself a multiplied life and love of justice, which is nothing but the spiritual existence of justice in the world. If, that is to say,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlii. 8, xlvi. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. vii. 11, cxix. 8, li. 6, xxxv. 24, 28; Jer. ix. 23, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xxxvi. 28, xi. 7, xxxiii. 5, xlv. 7; Isa. xi. 4, 5: "Righteousness is the girdle of His loins." Righteousness is eternal, Ps. cxix. 142, 144, 160, cxl. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. viii.



there is a world of spiritual being without God, He cannot desire the justice which is in Him, and which is Himself, to exist simply in Himself; for justice cannot be a private property, so to speak; according to its idea, it is constituted a universal good for the reason, where it is found. As self-willing justice, therefore, as the energetic will of His own Self-preservation, God cannot be indifferent as to whether the world corresponds to this justice or not. There would be no earnest pursuit of justice on God's part, if He merely wished to be just Himself, and was indifferent as to the maintenance of the absolute good of justice without Himself. For justice, where it exists, is also love of justice generally as a universal good and law of the spirit.

The zeal of the divine Justice for its further assertion in the spiritual world without God is shown in detail, first, by the fact that God implants therein the sentiment and knowledge of objective right, and constantly augments that implantation by a progressive revelation of what is just *in concreto*, or by *legislation*.<sup>1</sup> It is also shown by the fact that He estimates the conduct of the creature by the law of justice. That is the *justitia judicialis*, the vigilance or the open eye of justice,<sup>2</sup> which includes the absolute estimation by the rule of justice of what has been realized. But of itself this would only be an ideal determination of the worth of the concrete in its relation to justice, and would not secure its assertion. Therefore it is still required by the idea of justice that it should also, in the third place, energetically effectuate itself in reality. Thus it becomes *retributive* (*justitia rependens*). The *reward* of an individual must accord with his desert, or with the estimation formed of his desert. This follows from the relation of the physical, or of Nature, to justice. The former is subordinated to the latter by its idea, and, indeed, in such a way that the physical must at the same time serve as an agent in realization, as a means for bringing justice into manifestation. And that in two ways. The agreement with the rule of justice must become praise or divine approbation. This approbation is not to be thought as of a merely ideal kind,

<sup>1</sup> Pa. xxxii. ciii. cxix.

<sup>2</sup> Pa. xxxiv. 6, lv. 17; Jer. xxxii. 19; Job xxxiv. 21; Rev. i. 14, ii. 18; Heb. iv. 13.

but it is also to be thought as effective. It is the principle of the correlation of well-being with justice or spiritual worth. And this is the essential thing in *justitia remunerativa*.<sup>1</sup> Although the act or state, upon which the divine approval follows, may be at all times no mere personal work of the creature of himself, and although in that case there may be no place for desert, it nevertheless accords with justice, that the realization of the individual, that his share in the reality of life, should remain in harmony, and not in discord, with his own worth. What is just and good, and what is good, are associated; and in this proportioned association the physical, or the measure of the reality of life, serves for the revelation of justice, which must be the power superior to all reality. Similarly the physical is adapted to be an auxiliary means for the realization and manifestation of justice, since well-being is detached from wrong. Where, indeed, the world has advanced to a real opposition to justice, and has undertaken to form an illegal reality, in spite of that opposition there must still be an assertion of law. In opposition to the real negation of the divine in injustice, and the annulling of the divinely ordained proportion between desert and reality, a no less real negation, in order to the re-establishment of the proportion, must ensue. If halt was made at the mere ideal divine disapproval of injustice, whilst reality was still the possession of the bad, the divine Justice would either be indifferent to its real maintenance, and therefore indifferent to itself, or would be powerless, and thus in contradiction with its character as exalted unconditionally above, and the lord of, all natural reality. Thus only by the real negation of the acts of the criminal will can the divine maintain itself as justice, which still asserts itself, in spite of the violations of itself, to be seen in reality,—that is, it can only maintain itself as *justitia vindicativa* against the blow of the criminal will by the counterblow of *punishment*. Only under this condition can freedom be allowed the wicked will in the world. In this final element of justice, of *justitia rependens*, both as regards reward and punishment, there is a necessary recurrence of justice to *Omnipotence*. As certainly as right is absolute right, which must have a simple

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xx. 5, 6, 12; Rom. ii. 7, 29, ἵκανος, τιμὴ, δίκη. The New Testament also recognises the idea of *μὴ τίς*.

desire to become effective, and which should become effective, it cannot be impotent; it must be clothed with Omnipotence over reality; the divine Power must be the servant of the divine Justice. Therefore the Holy Scriptures so frequently speak of the *Arm* of the divine Justice.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Omnipotence is exalted by the divine Justice to a higher power and value. Both are inseparably associated. If Omnipotence were without Justice, it would be unspiritual, essentially arbitrary and contingent, according with an external fate. If Justice were without Omnipotence, it would be paralyzed; it would be limited to the ideal sphere and excluded from real being, and thus contradictory to its absolute exaltation. Finally, were Omnipotence not the servant of the divine Justice, but co-ordinate therewith, pursuing, so to speak, its own impulse, or even so governing Justice that the absolute and exclusive demonstration of power, as a revelation of His glory, were a necessity imposed upon God, as at times an absolute Predestinationism would have it, there would remain at best a contingent coincidence of the demonstration of power with the divine Justice. But nature and spirit cannot be co-ordinate in God; still less can the latter be subordinate to the former. But we pause to speak with more definiteness upon that most difficult point, the punitive Justice.

6. The negation by the divine judgment of the opposition to absolute right has been already considered purely in itself (even though the fact of amelioration be wanting), as something absolutely just, necessary, and worthy. The punitive Justice, of which God is the administrator in the universe and the State in the social sphere, is the *restitution of the honour of the divine right*, which has been injured and violated, because it has been repelled from a sphere to which it of necessity lays claim, and because it has been relegated to itself; so that it is deprived of its Absoluteness, if it stands in impotent opposition to its contrast. Therefore the restriction put upon it by wrong becomes a tension, which relieves itself in avenging judgment. Amongst the various *Theories of Punishment*, the Theory therefore of Amelioration so called

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 10, l. 9, lii. 10 (at the same time the Scriptures teach a subordination of the divine power to the divine justice as the end of the divine power).

is untenable, which merely regards punishment as established for the purpose of initiating *amelioration*. In that case the right to punish would be sacrificed to psychological contingencies, and punishment could not allowably be, unless punishment be foreknown to improve. His consciousness of right says to every man that the impenitent attitude is doubly deserving of punishment. Further, an egoistic motive for improvement would be reckoned upon. Mere fear of punishment is no proof of genuine improvement. Still less adequate are the *Theories of Deterrence and Prevention*, because both one-sidedly destroy the individual as a means to an end. That theory alone suffices which recognises a good in punishment itself, inasmuch as it abolishes the semblance that right and wrong, at any rate as opposed to the real world, are equally entitled to esteem, and which recognises in punishment the reinstatement of the honour due to right and justice. This is wont to be called the *Absolute Theory*; but it is to be accurately distinguished from mere retaliation (the theory of the Pythagorean ἀντιπενονθός), which might be revenge. Nor is the fundamental principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,"<sup>1</sup> the so-called *lex talionis*, to be found in the New Testament; nor does it follow from the absolute theory of punishment. It is not the pain which is endured by the victim of a wrong, which rightly calls for a corresponding pain in the doer.<sup>2</sup> That pain of itself has no right to demand the pain of another. Another's pain would be no healing of our own. Sooner might it be thought that punishment had to indemnify for the loss done to one's fellow-creature by wrong; but mere compensation is not punishment; its place is without punishment in the so-called Law of Property. It is violated justice, which demands for its own sake, and not for the sake of something else, the restitution of that marred proportion, and which demands satisfaction by punishment: the holiness of the constitution of the universe is called for, a holiness which exhibits and is based on the Holiness and Justice of God. Besides the material restitution for which a criminal is answerable, he is answerable for an atonement to justice; for, supposing restitution to have been made, every-

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 11; comp. Matt. v. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Cousin, *du Vrai du Beau et du Bien*, 1853, p. 424.

thing has not been retrieved *in integrum*.<sup>1</sup> The lawless will, which has discharged itself in one bad deed, is a potentiality inimical to the constituted order of a universal kind, which may again break out at any moment into wrong, and is already an alien and an enemy by its existence in God's world, and has already by its single wrong act brought the validity of the whole Law of the Universe into question.<sup>2</sup> If, then, justice demands a proportioned relation between moral worth and well-being or free living movement, it also demands, in reference to the lawless will, a proportionate reduction of its freedom, a proportionate negation and withdrawal of participation in the freedom or well-being attaching to the state of innocence; it demands a necessary check or negation allied with suffering, something which essentially is *θάνατος*.<sup>3</sup> He who has loaded himself with guilt has previously degraded himself; and Right may claim that, according to the proportion of his deterioration, the circuit of his freedom and well-being should be changed. Only if he acknowledge the justice of this claim, is a restoration possible. If, therefore, the Absolute Theory recognises its proper object in the restoration by means of punishment of the honour due to the divine Justice, it is not thereby maintained that the revelation of retributive justice is or *must* be the ultimate end. It may rather have a wider intention; punishment may awaken and sober the consciousness; and thus there may be the association of a wider aim, regard to amelioration; only justice, which really reveals itself in the negation of opposition, already has in itself its value and necessity, although that higher aim be not reached, which, if freedom exists, is not mathematically certain. A simple shall-not-be (*nicht Seinsollendes*) is aimed at by the punitive justice, and that is essentially a good thing. May it not at least be said in reference to the satisfaction or atonement, which violated divine Justice must for its own sake require, that, where the will perseveres in its opposition to right, the desert of punishment, indeed the necessity of punishment, is indubitable, but that if there come an improvement, past desert has been annulled, punitive justice has nothing to do and to effect, genuine improvement is itself a negation

<sup>1</sup> This the Law of Trespass-offering, Lev. x., acknowledges.

<sup>2</sup> Jas. ii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii.; Rom. vi. 23.

and a death of the lawless will, a transmutation of the enemy of right into an organ of the same ; may it not be said that the divine Justice simply demands the alternative—of this death of penitence, or the putting of itself in motion as the agent of punishment ? At least no one can deny that true penitence embraces the candid acknowledgment of genuine and actual *desert of punishment*, and that the denial of this desert, and the unwillingness to suffer punishment and to surrender to the grace or disgrace of justice, is the most certain proof of a mere semblance of penitence. And it would not be essentially different therefrom if repentance and the resolution to live a better life were already willing to work like the good which annuls desert of punishment, which comprises satisfying atonement for justice, and which gives a title to forgiveness. Such representations would be a poisoning of penitence, which, to be genuine, must stand the test of being ready to suffer punishment and to affirm the punitive decision of justice. Whether pardon should have place with respect to the judged and penitent sinner instead of the execution of punishment, and upon what condition, we have not here to inquire ; but this much is already determined, that pardon, if it enter, must be something different to the denial of guilt, and desert of punishment is not possible apart from atonement of the divine Justice violated. Pardon is rather the expression of guilt and desert of punishment at the very time that forgiveness is given ; for it is not innocent people, but those who deserve punishment, who are pardoned. In what way the negation of the opposition to the divine Right takes place, we have not here to speak more precisely. The nature of that negation (as well as of that of execution of punishment) will have to be judged, on the one hand, according to the various spheres, which are vigorously embraced by the divine law, consecrated or sanctified by their defence, and on the other hand, according to the nature of the opposition, which cannot possibly remain simply uncensured by the divine Justice.

§ 25.—*Transition to the positive spiritual Definitions of the Idea of God and their Relationship in general.*

Justice, that boundary between the physical and the spiritual, and that guide from the one sphere to the other, is already indeed of a spiritual, but formal and negative kind. Right is absolute right by embracing and defending *contents* of a positive kind that are absolute, and are absolutely worthy and potential, or by so defensively embracing what is holy (§ 24, 2). These contents, themselves of a spiritual nature, are the fulfilment and the soul of right. They also exist for the sake of the spirit, and desire a place therein, both in the intelligence and in the will (§ 23, 4), with both of which the *possibility* of the realization of those absolute contents and that absolute end, or of the holy, is given. But right finds its realization in the *ethically good*, or the union of the will and intelligence with the absolutely worthy and holy. When both will and intelligence are ministering organs for the realization of the holy, or for the ethically good, they attain their true form as well as their true contents. Justice has itself therefore its ultimate basis of right in the fact that it secures to the ethically good its absolute and sole rights. God is just as the absolutely good or *holy Will*, and as the absolutely good Intelligence or *Wisdom*.

1. We have necessarily raised ourselves above mere finite ends to the idea of an absolute end, and that indeed by means of the rationally necessary idea of justice, which can only maintain itself in the midst of the decay of all things finite if there is an absolute end or worth, defended by justice even in its judgment upon all that is merely finite. Thus there has at once and at one stroke arisen the idea of justice, as the negative defence of something really worthy, and the demand for such an absolute, really valuable and positive end or good,

for which justice is the defence. But concerning the contents of that absolute end, we have been unable hitherto to establish anything more minute or positive, except that as holy those contents cannot lie within the physical sphere and physical attributes, but only in the spiritual sphere. Of course justice already lies in that sphere, and, as has been just shown (§ 24), *is already the justice of a holy and absolute end*. But however certain it is that justice is a spiritual end in itself and a good of itself, it cannot be the proper contents of the spiritual world, although some views of the universe would not transcend justice. Its absolute right and its necessity it derives from a positive and absolute end, *which it protects, but which it does not create, but which must rather be given to it together with its whole empire*. Without such a positive and absolute end for which justice exists, justice would either be void and formal, or it must be brought into self-contradiction. For there would again be, that is to say, a contradiction, if things of merely finite worth were fenced round with the absolute necessity of right. Right guards the finite, — property, for example, — because it guards the person as a potentiality of unconditional worth, as a spiritual end in itself, to whom finite things present the possibility of self-formation and self-presentation. On the other hand, did nothing exist but physical things on the one side, and on the other justice, justice would merely exist for the ordering of finite things and finite worth; that which was to be thought as itself an end, would become a mere medium for physical ends, which are thus placed in an absolute position they cannot claim. And the spirit which merely adds finite things to its contents to arrange them justly, whilst it is in itself already superior to mere finiteness by means of justice, which, as absolute, must exist for the sake of the absolute worth and the absolute contents, which justice defends, and which are the sources of its absolute right and necessity, would remain mere consciousness and will of the finite. *Right generally presupposes things of worth to be already given, whether finite or infinite*, which it arranges and manages justly, and for the sake of which it exists; it is its own end, and maintains itself with absolute right only because and inasmuch as there also exist things of positive, indeed of absolute worth to defend, namely, *the whole spiritual sphere*. It asserts the honour and



the right of the spiritual as opposed to the merely natural or physical sphere.

2. That positive and absolutely worthy good to which absolute right itself refers as to its own legitimating basis, must be, it is true, of a spiritual kind, but it is not given with intelligence or will of themselves. For thought may of itself embrace everything possible, it even embraces Nature and the natural, without possessing by that means absolute contents; but how far the thought of a thing which is not absolutely worthy can be itself absolutely worthy is not obvious. And just as little, the thought of the thought. That would again be void in itself or merely formal. How could that which lay therein be unconditionally worthy? But the will of itself cannot be the absolutely worthy for similar reasons, as it may also desire to be the opposite. Rather that which is simply full of worth and purpose, and by means of which the just is just, and from which the just has its inviolability, is the *holy*, which exists for the sake of the intelligence and the will, desires and attains in them positive realization, and thus becomes the *ethically good*, which by the mediation of thought of course comes into existence for the practical spirit, the will.

*Observation.*—The fact that justice is the guardian of distinctions, invites us to hope that by this category at any rate the divine idea may be rescued from the Pantheistic view which was not yet overcome by the Cosmological and Physico-teleological stages. A historical ground for that expectation is visible in the fact that the Hebrew religion, in which the idea of justice plays so large a part, is also opposed to all heathen doctrines of God. But the Just Absolute we have reached—a world being hypothetically assumed—might also be thought as a mere just constitution of the universe, and thus be again confused with the creaturely. From that confusion the perfection of the concept of God by means of the ethical idea will first free us, and to that idea we now apply ourselves more definitely.

#### § 26.—*The Moral Argument.*

God is to be defined as the Good simply, and that not merely as law, or as potential good, but as perfect and existent good.

1. Apart from the juridical moment already discussed, there are two forms in which the Moral argument has appeared, and especially in Kant.

Faith in God, says Kant, is necessary to the belief in the triumph of good, which belongs to courageous advance in the moral life.<sup>1</sup> The certainty of that advance is continually threatened, he says, by the reality of evil, and especially by radical evil, and no security is offered against the danger in freedom. The idea of God, who aids the triumph of good, is thus a postulate of the practical Reason. But since, in his zeal for human freedom, Kant thinks himself subsequently compelled to put away divine aids, and merely supposes evil to be vanquished in the course of an infinite process, this postulate does not assist his standpoint. Kant perpetuates the struggle with evil, and eternally denies good full triumph. The objective turn of thought might lead further, according to which the realization of morality attained in the moral law does not simply include internal morality, but acts—indeed, an entire moral work. But to the success of that work there is also necessary the agreement of Nature (not given in the spirit, and independent thereof) with the moral purpose, a predisposition of Nature in favour of the spirit and its ends. Therefore, to hold fast to the moral purpose requires us to recur to a supreme and indivisible principle in faith, which has co-ordinated both harmoniously. But even that turn of thought would only transform the postulate into a proof if the absolute truth and necessity of the ethical idea hold good. If we are in possession of these two things, the attempt is not so difficult to rise thence immediately to the divine existence.

That attempt is made by a second mode of thought, which recedes, not to God as the moral Ruler or as the ethical Creator of the physical world, but to God as the Founder of the moral law or of our knowledge of the morally good. The moral law reveals itself to us irresistibly as something which has absolute authority in itself, as a categorical imperative. It cannot arise from the physical world; for it is exalted above that world, and claims lordship over it. Nor could we ourselves, being finite, have given to it its absolute authority; it thus presupposes an absolute Founder, by whose agency it

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Kant, *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*.

has been implanted in us. Consequently an absolute and moral Lawgiver exists. — This would be the Cosmological argument morally applied. But just as (§§ 4, 19) this argument, in its universality, left the possibility open that the essence of the world might itself be God, so it might also be said here: that conscience, as a knowledge of an infinite worth, demonstrates that man is not simply finite, but has in himself an infinite side, inasmuch as the infinite exists for him; that the ideal side, or, to speak with the *Stoa*, the God in man, the truly free in himself, governs the empirical side of our nature; thus the unconditionateness of the demand is verified therein, whilst the universal validity of the moral law rests in the fact that the universal being of reason is expressed in the moral consciousness of the individual, that being which is itself exalted above individual liking; that it belongs, notwithstanding, to the essence of the moral, that the law to be fulfilled is not given by an outer or foreign power, but by ourselves (absolute autonomy), seeing that we are only able to will the good for its own sake, in personal apprehension of its internal good. But we should not in that way transcend Pantheism; in the distinction of the moral relation to oneself and to our neighbour a basis is wanting for religion.

2. We have already had to resort several times to the *ethical* (§ 11) in our previous inquiry, where we saw that thought must will to become knowledge,—that is, must define itself teleologically or ethically, in order, by virtue of the ethical factor, not to be mere imagination or sport, but to be thought proportionate to the end which the blessing of truth embraces within itself. We have similarly seen how it is the ethical which reconducts from doubt to faith,<sup>1</sup> the religious certainty of which is the presupposition in the scientific certainty we are in search of. Thought which would become knowledge, after it has discovered the preceding definitions of the idea of God, approaches the ethical idea itself, and, that that idea may disclose itself more minutely, makes it material of knowledge, having previously allowed itself to be led thereby in practice or in love to wisdom. To that end we shall ask, *in the first place*, what the ethical idea itself is,—in relation to the non-ethical, as well as to the justice especially, by which

<sup>1</sup> § 12; comp. Gal. iii. 24.

we have reached this stage. It will *next* be asked, whether the idea of the ethical is merely a contingent and subjective idea of the reason, or a necessary idea? *Finally*, we shall ask whether the ethical can be thought as a mere ideal only, as a command (law), or whether it is to be thought as an absolute reality in the absolute Essence, and whether God is to be defined as the absolutely ethical Essence? When these questions are satisfactorily answered, the Christian faith concerning God, which maintains the latter in the form of religious certainty, will have apprehended itself in its objective verification.

### 3. GENERAL DEFINITION OF THE IDEA OF THE ETHICAL.—

However the ethical idea arises within us, he who has but a general consciousness of it knows that he has in that idea thought the absolutely highest thought, which is not merely opposed to unconditionateness, but to everything else, by virtue of its internal worth and its necessity, a necessity infinitely higher than any in the physical sphere, and able to claim the highest honour. The ethical idea is the queen, whose throne is exalted above all else; it is also raised above all the preceding definitions of the divine idea, because all other things of worth are subordinated to it, and regulated by it. The fact that Life and Fulness of Might and Order and Design and Beauty exist, has merely a conditional importance, namely, an importance conditional upon its acknowledgment or incorporation by the ethical idea. Should those attributes contradict the idea of the ethical, they have no right to be esteemed of value. They can only be valuable in connection with that idea, and when controlled thereby. They have no true absoluteness in themselves, no demonstrable absolute *necessity* in themselves; everything physical first has its true goodness from the fact that it serves what is positively good, what is ethical, as end. By such a statement, what has been proved earlier is by no means recalled, namely, that there is a logical necessity to think absolute Essence with all the further categories which followed. If the ideas which answer to those categories have been suggested and awakened, they are also to be acknowledged as implanted *a priori* in the spirit, and as incapable of being disowned by rational thought. And that they are acknowledged is at first a mere matter-of-fact necessity of our rational constitution. From those immediately-evident declara-

tions of the reason, it could be shown that they are necessarily to be assumed if rational thought is to exist. But by that demonstration the ultimate question is not yet decided, the question as to the *why* of everything. Schelling rightly says, in his *Philosophy of Revelation*, that this ultimate question must also be considered, if thought is to attain full content—the question why thought itself exists, and thought of such a nature, and endowed with such necessities of thought? Why do absolute Being, Life, Intelligence, and Will exist? The answer to this question is given when we are able to name an absolute *Final Cause*, and are able to verify that cause both as necessarily to be thought and necessarily existent. That absolute Final Cause cannot be seen as yet in the mere idea of Justice. For, as has been shown, right is given for the purpose of guarding worthy ends; but the ends guarded cannot possibly be of a merely finite kind, if that defence is to be unconditioned, necessary, and just, for otherwise an infinite worth would be attributed to things of a finite worth. Certain, therefore, as it is that an absolute Justice is necessarily to be thought, there must also be an ultimate end of a positive kind, an ultimate and positive Final Cause. That Final Cause we cannot find in that goodness or that benevolence which were frequently attributed to the gods in Heathenism (for example, in Hellenism), because of their rich gifts, for which reason the religious sentiment of gratitude is aroused. In certain religions, especially the Oriental religions, the origin of this world is referred to the goodness of God, inasmuch as that goodness is so thought that the Deity surrendered His Essence to the world, divided and sacrificed Himself, and thus produced a world. Similar is the view of Emanationism. But mere *goodness* could not conduct us beyond the finite world and its worth. The gifts of Nature might also afford food to Egoism, and might place before man no higher end than his own welfare. Further, mere goodness might be regarded as a mere natural impulse, without freedom,—a work of the Nature in God; for example, as the effect of a superabundance, which relieved itself, so to speak, by a Self-communication. Thus Philo likens God to an overflowing cup. But in that case God would not have Himself under control,—He would act in a manner purely physical. Therefore goodness, which has no

absolutely worthy end, cannot correspond with the absolutely intentional we are in search of, and is to be widely distinguished from the Christian idea of Love. Emanationism possesses just as little the pure idea of the positively ethical. God would lose Himself, according to that theory, in pretended goodness in the world. According to its idea, the ethical must be the absolutely highest thing, and cannot sacrifice itself to another end. Add to this, such goodness—although the element of mediation in it was something new and positive, which pleased of itself—would be opposed to the divine Self-preservation or Justice, because it brought self-detriment to God. The ultimate, holy, and positive idea of end, with which thought can and must be satisfied, is positive moral good alone, to which justice occupies the relationship of guardian, as the form which maintains that moral good as its essential contents. Or if we place ourselves at the position of the ethical idea, justice is itself the negative side of the ethical, which, by virtue of its positive and unconditional worth and value, excludes and negatives in the just manner already considered (§ 24) everything inimical. Its obligatory force and strength, as has been shown, right derives, indeed, from the absolute worth of the positively good, as of the absolutely highest end, which as such is justly to be absolutely defended by justice. And thus the positively good, or the ethical, is the more deeply-lying ground or basis of all right which is unconditionally obligatory, just as political Right never does rest upon power or utility, but on morality. Seeing, therefore, that with all things of merely finite worth the question remains, "Why, or wherefore, does everything exist?" and, in the last resort, "Why do volition, and thought, and being exist?" there is relatively thereto a final and absolutely satisfactory reason which puts an end to all questioning. That reason lies in the idea of the ethical. In that idea, once thought, must the questioning cease as to the why, the *cui bono*, because the answer is that in that idea itself the *bonum* lies, and therefore the ultimate Final Cause, to transcend which is neither necessary nor possible. To transcend that idea would be to negative it. For if we thought anything to be higher than the ethical, the ethical would only be a means instead of the highest end. The ethical, when thought, is thought as

that which is the essentially good, as its own absolutely worthy and positive end.<sup>1</sup> In the idea of that absolute end and worth, thought can find its absolute point of rest. Thence those necessities which are implanted in us, in the first place as matter of fact, are recognized according to their ultimate reason, since it is quite possible by means of that idea to absolutely refer those necessities to their foundation, inasmuch as they may be shown to necessarily minister to the ethical. But is that ultimate Final Cause, which allows us to expect that thought and being may be embraced in its unity, actually a *necessary* idea? That is the second of the above questions.

4. The NECESSITY for thinking the ethical, for conceiving its idea, lies for rational thought in the necessity for postulating an end, and indeed an end absolutely worthy, positive, and rational (§§ 9, 11, 23). So it may be said from the point of view of the *highest good*, which is guarded by justice. Thought, which would become knowledge, already accepts wisdom, which is an ethical good, as its goal and guide. But the ethical is also unconditioned *law*, and in this aspect we may say, with Kant, that it is not something to be acknowledged or not, at the discretion of the rational subject, it is a duty to will it; and, since it must be thought, to be willed, the fundamental duty is to hold it fast in the consciousness. It is rationally necessary to think it, and that necessity is cognizable in its grounds and in its goodness. He would act illogically who rejected an ultimate unity; he is sacrilegious who rejects or stifles the idea of the good as the ultimate Final Cause, for he pulls down that which holds all human life together. He deprives himself of that which of itself reveals itself to be the holy and highest good, the thing most worthy. For that

<sup>1</sup> To this ethically good there of course attach themselves both justice and delight to impart, Self-preservation as well as the will to impart of Self. And thus the problem arises, how these two things, which apparently exclude each other, can be united? The more intimate knowledge of this point can only be given later. We shall find that this problem is only solved in the Christian, that is to say, the Trinitarian Doctrine of God. For even in the Hebrew religion that problem is not yet solved. In that religion the ethical law itself may either be thought dependent upon the ultimate divine perfection of power, or the divine Self-preservation may be fixed one-sidedly from fear of a heathen commingling of God with the world. But let it suffice in this place, that in the ethical as the holy and unconditional potential, we have attained the idea of a positive and absolute end.

reason the ethical is itself concerned upon its own side, that it should be conceived and thought. It is not so much that men possess the thought of it; it first possesses men by means of their conscience. It puts the idea of itself into man; man does not primarily form the idea; so that the autonomy can only be derivative and not primary. This creation is the privilege of the absolute idea; man's privilege is its reproduction and its discovery. He may more or less withdraw himself, but not without the consciousness of wrong. In thinking and acknowledging that idea, man follows a necessity, which is holy and which is higher than any mere physical or logical necessity, but which is *sensu eminenti* rational, for it first makes us truly rational. Our reason has an organization adapted to that idea, to the *bonum*, which absolutely pleases and satisfies of itself.

5. Thus THE THIRD QUESTION still remains: Is the ethical to be thought merely as potential and ideal, or also as an original *Being*? If the ethical idea occupies this unique and necessary position, and if an absolute divine Being is to be necessarily thought, the ethical, the thought of which is rationally necessary, cannot originally be outside of the Absolute, otherwise a something absolutely worthy would exist outside of the absolute Being. That truth, properly, is already contained in the fact that the ethical cannot be a mere subjective product of human thought, for the necessity for thinking it precedes the thought, and is not made by the thought; consequently this idea, which already by its implantation in the human spirit shows itself to be a real power, must be somehow associated with the absolute Being we call God. But the question may still be asked: Is the ethical merely something regulative in God, whether as regards Himself or as regards the world? or is the ethical an Existence, is it a good reality *in* Him, and is He its reality? Can the good be thought according to its pure idea, if it is everywhere thought, even in God, as merely potential or regulative, or is it to be thought as Existence in the Godhead? Since it cannot hover in air as something absolute and regulative, but must plant its foot somewhere, and indeed primarily, in or upon the absolute Being, it could only be mere potentiality, if it simply existed in the knowledge of the divine Being, and not in the Will and in the Being mediated by the Will.



Kant, indeed, would stop mainly at the regulative or legal aspect of good. But that the ethical should be thought as merely potential, as a law in or on the absolute Being, is inadequate to the idea of the ethical as the absolutely highest idea. Potentiality as such is non-existence; if the ethical is merely potential, it is non-existent. It is not the same with its idea as it is, for example, with mathematical truths, with respect to the internal absence of contradiction and truth of which it is a matter of indifference whether they really exist anywhere or not. Amongst all ideas, the ethical is just that idea in which reality, existence, is not indifferent but unconditionally inherent; for Schleiermacher<sup>1</sup> rightly says that if the moral law were only potential and not existent, it would not be an absolute potentiality, but a contradiction in itself. Indeed, were the ethical law eternally or necessarily separated from the existence it unconditionally seeks, the reason of this must lie outside of it, since it unconditionally demands existence. An absolute and invincible power would have to be supposed which hindered its finding the realization it sought. But in that way its unconditioned demand would have to be supposed at the same time as the impossibility of its realization, a dualism, which would annihilate the ethical itself, and which would be inconsistent with saying that the highest being must be thought to be in it, and therefore the control over all non-ethical being. If that attribute belonged to absolute Being (which cannot be thought apart from a positive relation to the idea of the ethical) solely as potentiality or problem, that would be the same thing as denying the absolute import of the ethical idea. We must therefore say that there exists in the absolute Being and Life the reality of the Ethical also.

Now it might be said that this reality need not necessarily be thought as eternally *completed*. The view might suffice that absolute Being and Life are the essence of the world, that the world increasingly realizes that potentiality, and that thus, ethically regarded, the Deity which is identical with the world is in process of realization. Of course, after what has been said, this is to be thought in such a way that a positive relation of the Absolute to moral good is to be supposed; but

<sup>1</sup> *Abhandlung ü. Naturgesetz und Sittengesetz.*

it might be supposed to be enough to say that the moral, which has its roots in the absolute Being as Law, has a progressive being in finite spirits; that the absolute moral law is latent as an impulse in the absolute Being, but that this law is a potentiality; that the absolute moral order only finds its realization progressively in the world; that the moral law, indeed, unconditionally demands its absolute realization, and nothing external to it can oppose this its demand, neither anything without the Deity nor the other divine attributes; but that *the ethical is by its very idea* the cause of absolute reality not belonging thereto; that it itself presupposes its opposite or its present non-existence, and that, therefore, the ethical cannot have an absolute or eternal reality, but only a progressive one. The first of these opinions, the assertion of an opposite required by the idea of the ethical, lies at the basis of the proposition, of course in its anthropological application, that apart from struggle virtue itself would not be. But militant virtue is itself manifestly an effectuating of virtue existent previously to the struggle, and which may exist, therefore, if there is no struggle in which to engage. But with reference to the divine Essence, the question would arise: Whence comes the need for struggle if the divine Being wills goodness, and not the opposite, as unconditionally as He thinks goodness? If an inimical principle to be combated is associated with the good principle from the very first, the reply must lead back to Dualism. More comprehensive is that thought expressed by the earlier philosophy of Schelling and that of Hegel: "There is no life without opposition and contradiction." But unless it is meant that the ethical itself would just as soon not be as be, by which its characteristic nature, the unconditionateness of its demand, would be denied, the ground of this contradiction, not being in the ethical, can only be in the physical. But the ethical idea is, indeed, exalted above the physical, and the ethical law, as the absolute highest thought, cannot therefore be subjected to the law of nature, or because of such a natural law to a law of necessary contradiction, unless with its absolute demand for perfect realization it is still to be a contradiction in itself.

It is more difficult to reply to another objection taken to the absolute realization of the ethical in the Deity, viz. that

it is essential to the ethical, not merely to have immediate existence, but because of the *will* to be, to exist only as that which is *consciously* willed. For it does not hold good of the human form of the good merely that it is essential to the ethical to have an existence which is not simply immediate and innate, and therefore given by nature. The actual and living will to be the good He is must also have its place in God,<sup>1</sup> for otherwise God would only be naturally ethical (*eine ethische Natur*). But what is naturally or immediately good is not the true realization of the good. If God were only fatalistically and compulsorily determined in His Being by the law of the ethical, or were He immediately at one therewith without conscious will, He would merely be a necessitated ethical substance, and not the God who is the prototype of holiness, whose image we ought to be. Indeed, apart from consciousness and volition, there could be no talk of the ethical, because good could not in that case be willed as such. But certainly as a place must be left for *will* in the Deity, the ethical in God cannot be exclusively attributed and ascribed to His Will to the exclusion of His Being; of an absolute and *eternal reality of good in God we cannot speak, because that reality is only to be produced by His Will*. If in the ultimate resort we built the ethical upon the divine Will, without determining that Will by the eternal ethical Being God desires to be, such a Will, because undetermined by the Essence and Being of God, would be ethically absolutely undetermined,—that is to say, it would be mere caprice and absolute power (*supremum liberum arbitrium*), and would be quite as much of itself a merely physical category as that ethical natural disposition which is immediately and, so to speak, fatalistically determined. If the ethical merely had its seat in the Will of God, and not in His Being, it might be only a chance, and not a necessity of the divine Perfection, that God should desire good and not the opposite. But a will, which is not necessarily and logically preceded by the ethical as determinant, as a will undetermined by the ethical, is a something merely physical, a simple assertion of power, a chance. However justified, therefore, we are in thinking of God, not as naturally or substantially ethical

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Sengler, *Die Idee der Gottheit*.

merely, but as a living and ethical Will, we need not lay such stress upon the Will, that the ethical has its existence or attains its being exclusively by means of the Will. To think of God only as an actual and ethical Will, and as only ethical Substance or ethical Being, leads essentially to the same result, and takes us back from the ethical sphere to the physical. Consequently, because of the Will, which is essential to ethical realization, it cannot allowably be denied that the Deity has eternally and absolutely the reality required by the ethical. In spite, then, of all these objections, we must insist that the ethical, which is unconditionally directed towards being, has that being, and in the Deity most perfectly. We must maintain that the absolute Being is to be thought as thoroughly ethical, or that the ethical eternally has perfect reality in the Deity.

*Observation.*—The last consideration, which requires the absolutely good Being and absolutely good Will to be thought together in the Deity, further calls for a living conception of the Divine Immutability and Self-identity—indeed, it brings us nearer at a step to the apprehension of the ethical as *Love*. We abide in contradictions, if we merely think of God in His ethical relations as absolute Law, or as the inflexible Being of that Law. And no less so if we suppose Him merely the *supremum liberum arbitrium*, the ultimate Power to Will. But certainly, then, as we have to suppose both these attributes, a new problem arises, namely, the question: How both are united in the divine Life—the immutable and ethically good *Being*, and the free divine *Will*, which cannot be determined by an external law or fate? However these two equally important interests may be reconciled (we shall possibly find the solution in the Doctrine of the Trinity), it is apagogically proved that we may not allowably suppose either a merely ethical *Being* of God, or a mere *Will*, or a Progress in which the Being is not also present, otherwise we should in either case sink back into the categories of Nature.

To sum up what has been said:

- (1) The ethical is the highest and inalienable thought, and has its appropriate place in the Deity.
- (2) It does not exist in the Deity merely as law, nor as immoveable and inflexible Being; it just as little has a merely progressive existence; but

- (3) It exists in the Deity in both ways, as eternally perfected ethical Being, and as living ethical Actuality, or Will.

3. But if the ethically good is to be thought of as an essential definition of the divine Life and Spirit, not as law merely, but as absolute realization, Pantheism is thus surmounted. That absolute realization of the ethical, which we must ascribe to God, He has not in the *world*, as we know it empirically. The opinion of those who think of God merely as the ethical knowledge or conscience of the world, or as the ethical *world-substance*, or as the ethical *world-spirit*, is, it is true, a higher form of Pantheism than the form previously mentioned of Identity, Substantiality, Dynamics, or physical Teleology; but it is wrong to think of God merely as the world-conscience, or as the ethical world-substance, or as the ethical world-spirit. All such definitions would be arbitrary and objectionable. For the *world*, as we know it *empirically* (we have not yet derived it from the idea of God), is not adapted to be able to pass for the absolutely perfect *reality* of good, *which we found to be necessary*. The reality, belonging to the absolute ethical, cannot lie in *knowledge*, in consciousness of the world of the ethical as the world-law immanent in intelligence or in the *conscience of the world*. For the existence of the ethical in mere knowledge is only knowledge of possibility, therefore non-existence, non-reality. One might rather say that the ethical is the indestructible and real foundation of the world—its eternal inner essence, and that therefore the ethical always has its reality as the ethical world-substance. But substance is a physical category; will and consciousness are contingent in substance as such. The ethical, on the other hand, as has been shown, aims at will and knowledge, seeks its reality therein, and this only is the perfect reality of the ethical which is not blind and arbitrary. Others, therefore, say that the ethical has the existence, which its idea demands, because it is the *moral world-spirit*, as a power diffused through the world—often, it is true, concealed and invisible, but nevertheless remaining secretly a peculiar power, which shows good, in spite of apparent defeat, to be always victorious again as the unique and permanent reality, and as power which controls its opposite. But the assertion that the

absolutely ethical merely exists as *world-spirit*, must include the assertion that the world is the pure realization of the moral and shows no opposition to the ethically good,—a statement without proof, and a mere assertion. But we shall not only be justified in doubting this unproven assertion, seeing that the world, alas! contains what is bad, but also in denying the possibility of a world's existing, in which the ethical can have the eternal and absolute realization pertaining to the idea of the ethical. For apart from the fact that the world, which we know empirically, our earth in short, is certainly not eternal, but has become in time, *growth* pertains to it, and growth is the contrary of absolute reality. The ever victorious realization of the power of good, which alone endures over evil by means of Judgment, continually shows, indeed, the apparent reality and the exceptionableness of evil, and shows the persistency of good; it maintains the possibility, but not the absolute reality of the ethically good. Strauss's makeshift is, if possible, still less adequate. In order to think the world as an ever complete reality of good, as remaining in eternal *ἀποκατάστασις*, he maintains that evil only exists in relation to the subjective mode of view, and is a mere semblance, which arises if the individual is not seen in connection with the whole, in which imperfection or evil in single things is completed by the perfections belonging to other individual things. That is the *Theory of Complement* (*Ergänzungstheorie*), which, if it is not quite abstracted from the ethical sphere, and if it passes over into the æsthetic, may obtain a semblance of possibility from the fact that it diverts attention from the internal to the external, that is to say, to the moral work. For in the sphere of external things a completion of one thing by another of course takes place. But if the main stress as regards the ethical falls upon the mental disposition, and a good disposition only exists where the good as such is willed in individual cases, for this very reason willed absolutely, and where its idea has an intensive presence in the consciousness and will, it is clear that, as regards the lack of volition as to good generally, conceded by Strauss with respect to the single individual, the good existent in others cannot become complementary. Rather, however diversified the revelation of the moral in the sphere of deeds, every person must inwardly love,

with a pure and intensive love, the good generally, in order to pass for truly good. If, then, the moral imperfection of all men is conceded, it cannot be any longer said that the moral has in the world that absolute reality its idea requires. And inasmuch as the absolutely good is to be thought as necessary as well as to be supposed necessarily existent, we are directed to its existence in the absolute Being, namely, as absolute Spirit; the Deity Himself is to be designated as the ethical Absolute.

*Observation.*—The divine Essence, then, in Itself and apart from the world of development and change, such as we know it, can only be possibly thought as absolutely ethical if *Self-consciousness and Self-determination, that is to say, if Personality belong to God*. For only in Will which consciously determines itself, is there the possibility given of the ethical; the impersonal cannot as yet be ethical. But at this point a new problem opens up. Personality seems to make God finite. We have previously regarded God as the infinite original Being or Essence—indeed, as the original All of being; for that reason the expression “the divine Being,” or “the Deity,” is selected for our main division (§ 15). How then is the Deity, the infinite, omnipresent Essence to be thought of as Personality, which is apparently expressive of individuality and the singular? How may we abide by the view that, in spite of Personality, God is originally the Totality of Being, and therefore a universality attaches to Him, inasmuch as somehow all being must originally be included in him? This new problem, also, will only be solved by means of that idea of God which is specifically Christian (§ 31a).

4. By the results already gained a certain knowledge, if in many ways obscure, is already given prior to Christianity, namely, that God is just not only in His dealings, but also in Himself, and that because He is at the same time positively good.<sup>1</sup> It is true that the *Religions of Heathenism* are brought in this respect into a peculiar dilemma. There is in them the necessity, on the one hand, of thinking the divine as personal, even in the religious interest, which desires that a Thou be opposed to the I, and which is itself in the heathen form of personification a relative advance, even in an ethical respect. For personality is the specific form for the possibility and realization of the ethical, and the ethical can only be thought as

<sup>1</sup> §§ 24; 26, 2.



impersonal, if it is represented merely as law, which would be an inadequate representation. But inasmuch as Heathenism advances to the personification of the divine, it allows itself to become divided polytheistically into a plurality of individualities, which are wanting therefore in absoluteness, just as the heathen gods are in many ways ethically defective, and the immutability and absolute realization of the ethical are not to be found in their midst. But Heathenism, notwithstanding, has, on the other hand, a partial presentiment of the absoluteness of the divine, and indeed of the necessary and absolute unchangeableness, the inflexibility, of the ethical. Starting from that point, the idea of a Fate, endowed with all power, but impersonal, is sketched, in which at best the morally good enters negatively as the absolute right, as the disannulling judgment, and fades into a rigid and absolute law of the universe, heartless and pitiless. There is thus in the former case an attempt at ethical personality, but with the loss of the absoluteness of the divine and ethical. In the latter there is absoluteness, but with the loss at any rate of the positively ethical character, because of the impersonal fate. The heathen religions do not combine both absoluteness and personality; they rather assign each to different beings, although they ascribe to their gods individual rays of ethical goodness. If we look to Philosophy, the *Stoa* has transformed reason into fate or destiny, and at the same time fate becomes a *πρόνοια*,<sup>1</sup> which exists, indeed, apart from an absolute Teleology, according to the Stoic Eschatology, which merely ends in an endless round. Plato's philosophy stands higher than the *Stoa*; not so much because of his ruling ethical idea, *δικαιοσύνη*,—that he shares with others; but he also speaks in numberless passages of the *αὐταρχθόν*, indeed of the *θεῖον*, although it is questionable whether, considering the dualistic remainder in his system, he has thought God as *at once* absolute and personal.

But, in reference to the interweaving of the divine Absoluteness and ethical Personality, the Old Testament undeniably occupies a position of great pre-eminence. Its idea of God includes both Personality (*Panim*)<sup>2</sup> and Absoluteness, and that

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Trendelenburg's *Beiträge*, II.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 14; Lam. iv. 16; Ps. xxi. 9; Num. vi. 24-26 (the priest's blessing).



ethical, and the latter attains in it to far the stronger and purer exhibition. The idea of justice attains in the concrete giving of the Law to discovery and rich application. And the same idea has its roots in a still more profound idea, positively ethical. It deserves, indeed, special consideration that in the Old Testament the *religious* idea of the *δσιον* of holiness (*kodesh*) lies at the basis of, and precedes, the *ethical* idea of justice. Indeed, the whole giving of the Law is an emanation of the Holiness of God, which men are to grow to resemble. Therefore the Law speaks of holy places, seasons, persons, and acts, which, whilst they correspond with the law of holiness, are also instituted or ordained in accordance with justice. Jehovah is called the Holy One in Israel,<sup>1</sup> and the ruling sentence in the Law is, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. xi. 44). Although *kodesh* may always<sup>2</sup> be in the Law a relative idea, expressive of separation from the unclean world, and next Jehovah's special relation to Israel, whom He has selected from the profane world as His peculiar possession, just as, conversely, He belongs to Israel in a special sense; nevertheless, the nature of holiness in Israel does not originate in this relation to the Jewish people, as prophecy shows.<sup>3</sup> But, generally, the Holiness of Jehovah is neither a merely negative idea, nor merely an idea of relation. It already includes in itself, according to its probable etymology, positive purity (brightness) and exaltation above all defect,<sup>4</sup> and is therefore in itself that which is whole. The same Being who, when He approaches Moses in a manifestation of Himself, says, "The ground whereon thou standest is holy ground," is also called on that account the Merciful, Pitiful, and Good.<sup>5</sup> Next Jehovah is thought to be holy in Himself, in His Essence, and not externally only in His dealings.<sup>6</sup> His Will desires in a holy manner holy contents, the blessing of holiness.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa. v. 16. Jehovah shows Himself to be holy by His justice.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xii. 16, xxix. 19, 23, xl. 25, xli. 16, xliii. 3, liv. 5; Ezek. xxxix. 7; Ps. lxxi. 22; comp. Hos. xi. 9; Hab. iii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Wolf Graf Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. relig. Gesch.* part 2, pp. 120, etc., 1878; Oehler, *Theol. A. T.*; Caspari, *Ueber Jes. I.*, in the *Zeitschrift für luth. Theol.*

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xx. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Ex. xxii. 31; Ezek. xxxix. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. xi. 44, 45; Ps. xxii. 40; Isa. vi. 3; Ezek. xxxix. 7; comp. Rev. xv. 4; John xvii. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Pa. lxxviii. 14, cxi. 9, cxlv. 17.

There is in all His gifts, both in physical gifts as well as in the Law, a holy motive and a holy end, wanting in Heathenism. Jehovah Himself, as the Holy One, or His Holiness, is the contents He desires to see among His people. He will glorify *Himself*, "His Name," among His people. But, on the other hand, the Holiest of all is not yet revealed in the Old Testament. What the Holiness of God bears in its bosom, the deeds it will still perfect that it may make the world a sanctuary, are not yet manifest. In the Old Testament the Holiness of God is still a sanctuary, in the sense of an unapproachable mystery. And here a phenomenon becomes lucid, which has about it at the first glance something remarkable. In the New Testament the idea of the divine Holiness retreats very far into the background; with the exception of the Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> it is only mentioned in two passages.<sup>2</sup> The reason is that the perfect revelation, "the Holy of Holies," is disclosed, and instead of the divine distance which plays so great a part in the Old Testament, the presence of God enters, His communion with us in Christ. From the mystery revelation is born. As a matter of fact, if we regard its positive import, the idea of the Holiness of God is preserved, and especially by means of the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον*. But when God discloses His heart, other significant phrases enter, which give more expression to the communion of God with the world, especially to the name of Father; whilst instead of distance, positive expressions of the love, grace, wisdom, or light there is in God, are formed.

*Observation.*—That the divine Holiness is in the Old Testament no mere negative or transcendent attribute of God, but is also of positive value in the realization of the world, may be especially seen in the fact that in the later books of the Old Testament, Justice, in which Holiness receives its effectuation, is not merely thought as citing before its tribunal or as retributive, but as communicating, nay, creating a new spiritual life. It is especially so in Isaiah.<sup>3</sup> Thus Justice remains the Self-preservation, the actual Self-identity of God, and thus becomes effective in legislation and judgment as citing before its tribunal and judging. But it does not stop there. According to prophecy, it also evokes

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iii. 7, iv. 8, vi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> John xvii. 17; 1 John ii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. ix. 7, xlii. 13, lix. 17, lxiii. 15; 2 Kings xix. 31.

what it demands, or is creative. It creates a new spiritual life by applying its soul, Holiness, to the propagation of itself in the world.<sup>1</sup> That being so, God again corresponds with Himself, or is just, inasmuch as He also brings about new life. This Holiness is also brought into union with the divine Spirituality. Mention is made of the Spirit of the Holiness of God.<sup>2</sup> But the definition of the divine Righteousness only attains to comparative clearness and positive contents by means of the completed revelation of God.<sup>3</sup>

### §. 27.

God as absolute ethical Spirit is also absolute Intelligence and Wisdom.

*Observation.*—Properly speaking, the Physico-teleological argument might conduct us to the divine Intelligence, as was pointed out in that place. Indeed, even the Ontological argument leads to the Absolute as Being which thinks and knows. For the Absolute (§ 18) was the Primary Possibility of thought and knowledge as well as being; for how could that be thought, we asked, which constitutes this Primary Possibility, unless it is itself spiritual Being, Intelligence, were it only as the real Potentiality of Intelligence? But it is in this place only, starting from the ethical which is necessary and absolutely real, that the *Absolute Intelligence* as necessarily to be thought has its absolute, that is, its teleologic verification.

1. Since God is absolutely good Being and good Will (§ 26, 2), He must also be absolute Consciousness or Intelligence. For the will is not good apart from the consciousness that what it wills is good and not the opposite. Otherwise it could not be said to be willed, because it is good. In that fact we have the absolute verification of the divine Intelligence, namely, by means of that Goodness simply, which can lack no ability to do what it requires, and with which nothing can be co-ordinated, because everything else, even Intelligence, is in the ultimate resort a mere ministering and mediating element. Thought, apprehension, only participates in *absolute* worth as

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xi. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. li. 11; Isa. lxiii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 17; John iv. 24; capp. xiv.-xvi.; 1 Cor. xv. 45, etc.

something comprised and willed by the ethical, as something which comprehends the ethical, in short, as something related to the ethical. By this derivation of intelligence from the ethical, which is its warranty, it might seem that we contradict the fact that the ethical itself is manifestly, notwithstanding, constituted only by intelligence, if what has been previously said holds true, that the former desires the personal form. But the two things are quite consistent: apprehension is a constituent element of the ethical, and has nevertheless no absolute worth in itself, nor is it, any more than the will, co-ordinate with the ethical, but apprehension in God in the ultimate resort eternally exists for the sake of the ethical, has its absolute goal therein, and is therefore also eternally requisite to the ethical for its own ends. And in this fact the correct affiliation of Intelligence in the concept of God generally is already notified. The ethical in God already approves itself as the absolute bond and the hegemonic principle relatively to the classification of the divine attributes.

2. The Godhead, absolute in all His definitions, and therefore also absolute as thinking, is absolute *Ability to apprehend* or absolute Intelligence, and this ability is also eternal, absolute and actual, since nothing can be thought to restrain it either within or without God. The contents of the Apprehension, without which the Intelligence could not be actual, are above all and originally included in the absolute Spirit, in God Himself, for God alone is originally the Original Being, the Totality of Being. His Knowledge, the subject-matter of which He Himself is absolutely, comprehends Him in His Absoluteness and Infinity. If Origen thinks that God cannot conceive or comprehend Himself, because He is infinite and therefore incomprehensible, he confuses the *Infinitum* with the *Indefinitum* or the absolutely undefined, even the logically limitless, which, as has been previously shown, is a no-thing as well as a no-thought (p. 199). But God is defined, is logically limited, by everything which is not Himself, whether possible or actual; and because He is defined, He is also comprehensible by His thought. So also the possible in the world, and the actual too, is no unlimited plurality, but has its logical limits in the impossible, just as

the latter has its limits in the former. By virtue of His absolute Intelligence, God is therefore, in spite of His Infinity, comprehended by His own Knowledge, and, inasmuch as contents and form are equal, He is absolute Knowledge, penetrating everything in Himself with light, even searching the depths of Deity.<sup>1</sup> It also pertains to this absolute Knowledge that He not merely is and has consciousness of everything He is in Himself, but He also knows that all that is thus thought is Himself. For otherwise He would not know the truth absolutely. But the contents of the divine Knowledge are not therewith exhausted. The absolute Knowledge of the divine Understanding is divided by ancient Dogmatics<sup>2</sup> into the *scientia Dei necessaria* or *naturalis*, the *scientia Dei libera* or *visionis*, and the *scientia Dei media*. As far as the *scientia necessaria* is concerned, there pertains to it, in the first place, God Himself, His whole Essence,—He knows that Essence in its truth and goodness, together with all the potentialities of His Fulness. He further knows it as a unity, well regulated and harmoniously combined by Himself as absolute Spirit. Just for that reason He also knows the whole sphere of the eternal truths which are not initially works of His Will, but which, necessary in themselves, eternally inhere in the divine Essence, and have their original seat in the divine Spirit. To that enumeration belong the eternal laws of thought and being generally, and especially the ethical laws. Finally, to the *scientia Dei necessaria*, side by side with that which is necessarily existent, and with the realization which is God, there also belongs the sphere of the *in any wise possible* to God, the Primary Possibility, whether immediately by His own agency, or whether by the mediation of created causality or freedom, if this is brought into being by the free act of God. The sphere of the *in any wise possible*, in spite of the Infinity of the divine Power, is still again a limited one, namely, it is limited by the impossible. For example, that which opposes the eternal truths God cannot think or will as related to Himself, and therefore as *in any wise possible*. His perfect Knowledge is also a knowledge of what is impossible, because contradictory to the eternal truths.

Different now from this whole sphere of the necessary, to

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, I. p. 289.

which even the realization of the divine Being itself belongs, as well as from that of the in any wise possible, is the *scientia Dei libera* or *visionis*, so called because it comprises the actual realm created by the free act of God<sup>1</sup>. This knowledge, which is also called *representatio visionis*, because related to the actual, would thus be the *analogon* to our empirical knowledge. God cannot obtain this knowledge by being receptive merely, by a passive impression, but He knows everything in a way which we cannot better describe than as an intuitive apprehension of the matter presented. It has, it is true, been frequently thought that God might have this intuition purely by virtue of His Self-intuition. But the eternal knowledge of His idea of the world, or of the world as it is first comprehended within His Spirit, must be different to His knowledge of the world in its realization. Indeed, were it even said that the Self-intuition of God was not merely related to the eternal world-plan in His Spirit, but also to His divine activity, whereby that plan is realized and which progresses, nevertheless there would not be given therein a knowledge of the world in its realization. For in the mere Self-intuition as an intuition of His actual volition, there would not come into intuitive perception the objectively realized effect of that volition, since that will is different to the active will of God Himself. God must therefore also have an intuition of things as they are in themselves, as well as of the causes which really bring them into existence, and of the effects necessitated by those causes. A further conclusion follows, if we have to suppose a *freedom of the creature*. For then what is supposed thereby also belongs indeed to the *scientia Dei libera* in the preceding sense, in so far as the freedom of the creature can only subsist on the supposition of being dependent every moment upon God. But the existence of free powers can only be secured for the knowledge of God by the Self-intuition of God in His operation. On the other hand, the knowledge of actual free acts cannot reach God by His Self-intuition of itself. Free causalities would not exist, but only His actual Will, if by mere Self-intuition God knew not merely the possibility of their acts, but their realization also. The divine Self-intuition thus comprehends, as far as the contents are

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxix. 15; Matt. vi. 32; Acts xv. 8.

concerned, everything if possibility be regarded, but not everything possible as actually realized. God does not see everything actual in Himself, seeing that there are also things which are not the mere effects of His will. For all that, there must also be an intuitive knowledge in God of this free sphere, as well as of everything else that is realized, although that knowledge is by its very nature partly unthinkable by us. Rothe<sup>1</sup> even ascribes receptivity to God as an excellence; and that idea is adapted to reject passivity and yet attain what we require. Without it there could be no mention even of an actual relation of reciprocity between God and man, such as religion calls for. But the apprehension of this point depends upon the solution of the former problem,—how the Self-preservation of God consists with a living relation to the world (§§ 31, 31a). Yet we can understand thus much here, that God must not be passive, even in the intuitive apprehension of the free sphere. In Him are found, indeed, all the possibilities of things, even of free causes; by His Power they live every moment, and derive their ability to put themselves in motion from Him alone. By means of this self-effectuation of the free creature nothing can be done which God had not already comprehended to be possible in His eternal Self-intuition (*scientia necessaria*). Seeing, therefore, that God's knowledge is indeed conditioned by free causalities, but that this conditioning faculty of the creature is nevertheless mediated by God and His freedom, and persists from the same cause, there can be no mention of a passivity, of a divine passion superinduced by the creature. It is God who conditions Himself thereby, provided He has in His Intelligence a receptivity relatively to the finite.

By the *scientia Dei media* the Dogmatic Theologians meant a divine knowledge of what would have happened if something else had not, or conversely, of something which would not have happened if something else had. If free beings actually exist, God must in fact also know,—if something different should happen or might have happened in the realm of possibility to what had actually taken place,—what consequences would follow,—what series of effects from the abstract realm of the possible would be consistent, or would be wrought

<sup>1</sup> Compare Rothe, *Éthik*. 2d edit. vol. I.

as a consequence upon its side in the realm of possibility. That knowledge is also called *scientia Dei conditionata* and *futuribilem*.<sup>1</sup> Little as we can know (apart from the purpose of the world itself, which must be absolutely secure) in individual points what would happen or might happen, if something else did not take place, or had not taken place, still, it cannot be questioned that, if there are free creatures existing, God knows in all cases how His universal plan is to be carried through, and that includes a *scientia Dei conditionata*, in connection with which fact it only remains for us to remember that God is not passively conditioned by that free agency, but that free creatures can only form in His plan a factor of themselves as secondary causalities because of His Self-determination or Self-conditioning. If, on the other hand, the *scientia Dei media* is not related to the action of God, but only to the knowledge of that which the free creature would do or neglect, if something else happened or not, in that case decision is dependent upon the question to be especially answered as to the relations of the divine Knowledge to the free acts of the creature.

3. Perfect divine Knowledge, then, is not a knowledge which only rises from a relative unconsciousness into consciousness. Nor is it an intermittent consciousness. The Keeper of Israel does not sleep and slumber.<sup>2</sup> If this is true of the divine Knowledge of the realized world, still more must it be true of the knowledge of God concerning Himself, without which He could not be actually ethical, or the actually absolute perfection of the ethically good. The divine Love also could not relinquish from love the *scientia sui necessaria* for a moment, and thus produce a lapse of God from Himself, perchance possibly in an ecstasy of love, as heathen religions and pantheistic philosophemes<sup>3</sup> would have it; such a thing may be imagined out of tenderness to the creation or something else. According to the Scriptures, the divine Omniscience embraces everything, even the invisible and

<sup>1</sup> Reference is made on this point to 1 Sam. xxiii. 10; Jer. xxxviii. 17; Ezek. iii. 6; Matt. xi. 21. Quenstedt, I. pp. 314, etc., and others, do not allow it to pass as a third and separate kind.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxi. 3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> But also some recent theologians in the supposed interests of Christology.



thoughts,<sup>1</sup> the least thing as well as the greatest,<sup>2</sup> even the transitory and frivolous, nay, what is wicked—in brief, that from which by His *scientia necessaria* He seems most removed. His eyes are like flames of fire, and nothing can wrap itself in darkness before Him.<sup>3</sup> This is practically applied to admonition against hypocrisy, and to remind us that even in solitude we always have Him as a witness, and also that we shall never be forgotten by Him in the world, or feel ourselves forsaken.<sup>4</sup>

4. RELATION OF THE DIVINE OMNISCIENCE TO TIME.—We have been obliged to affirm, if there is a world, no mere negative relation of God to it, to space and time and their contents, but a positive relation, and thus the necessity has been proved to us, that in the mode in which God knows everything not merely an eternal uniformity may be thought, but that there must be a movement in the divine Knowledge, in order that it may be a true knowledge, because a movement is seen in things, a decay and a birth, and thus God cannot always know the same thing as present (§ 19). But we were not able to discover as yet in the ethical Essence of God how to combine this with His necessary Self-identity. Growth and change cannot certainly be supposed in the divine Knowledge, in the sense that an absolutely new and unforeseen thing may present itself to Him, even by the agency of human freedom. For nothing can become real which was not possible; and the possibilities of all things are known in God from eternity. But still it is insufficient to think of God as not merely knowing everything at all times from eternity to eternity, but in spite of growth and decay simply knowing in the same way, as existing or present in eternal uniformity. For the divine Knowledge is not in reality eternally similar, otherwise decay would be a semblance, as growth would be. Yet, since this important question for the living relation of God to the concrete temporal world, and therefore superlatively for religion, always labours under the disadvantage of precon-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxxix. ; Heb. iv. 13 ; 1 John iii. 20. God is *καρδιολογούμενος πάντων* (1 Sam. xvi. 7 ; Dan. ii. 21 ; Jer. xxiii. 23), Acts i. 24 ; Matt. vi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 29, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 14, ii. 18 ; Ps. cxxxix. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. xvii. 10 ; Ps. xcl. 14 ; Matt. vi. 38.

ceived opinions, which arose in the pre-Christian time, and which correspond with a false idea of the divine Exaltation, for that reason we delay for a more close examination of the point at this place as at the proper *Sedes doctrinae*. The older Dogmatics, especially of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and after them J. Gerhard and Quenstedt, certainly thought it made a sublime declaration about God when it taught that everything which actually was, whether past, present, or future, stands before God eternally similar, as if it were in an eternal present. But by such a statement all knowledge of the distinctions of time, as far as God was concerned, was swallowed up in the present; He had no knowledge of the future or of the past as such; everything appears to Him, it was said, as present. But in that way nothing could, as regards God, either decay or grow: and thus, so far as the knowledge of God is still to be thought true, decay and growth, and history therefore, would only be semblance; and, on the other hand, if there is an actual growth and decay, the divine Knowledge, which sees everything, and even the future, in an eternal present merely, would not correspond with truth, seeing that the future is nevertheless not at present realized. The same thing follows if He still knew as present what was realized but past. There could not consistently in that case be a plan of the universe of a historically progressive kind, a wise government of the world which should call forth what was requisite in its season. For if everything, the past and the future, is, as those theologians would have it, quite the same to God as if it were present, since everything would contract for God into one glance eternally similar, into one point as it were, and everything would stand in the eternal Now or present, then it would necessarily correspond therewith *if the volitional aspect be regarded*, that God would also eternally will the same thing in the world, and thus He would regard and treat the world as eternally similar only, however dissimilarly the world, and especially free beings, are related to Him, Himself one and the same person at different times. He must therefore be similarly related to men whether unconverted or converted, a thing which is not for a moment possible, if with Schleiermacher the unconverted man may be allowably regarded as still standing quite in the mere

generic life, and destitute of the true sense of personality. Nor can it apparently be said, if the volitional aspect be regarded, that God only eternally wills the same thing; for He only wills everything in an operative and effective manner at its due season. If it were said that God on His part, His operative Will, is eternally and absolutely identical, then Christ even could no longer pass for an actually new fact regarded from the standpoint of the divine Operation. God for His part would always have wrought the same thing. It is therefore manifest how such an idea of the divine Omniscience (and Operation), which merely abstracts all associations with time, would conflict with the *interests of religion*, and make the whole relation of God to the world a lifeless relation. For if God merely knew men in a manner eternally similar, and knew everything, even the past and the future, only as eternally present, He would know a sinner, who afterwards became a believer, whilst he still stood beneath the divine ban, as eternally withal in the state of grace, and that would menace the truth of the divine Inclemency; conversely, whilst man is already in the state of grace, God would know him as eternally and at the present moment a sinner, and that would menace the divine Grace; yet the Scriptures do not speak of a divine oblivion of sin without cause, which fact must at least imply that God no longer knows the sin of the converted man, as He previously did, as present, but only as past. Consequently in the interests of the truth of the divine Knowledge, as well as in the interests of a living idea of God, there must belong to that divine Knowledge, which alike eternally comprises everything necessary and possible, and which will be at any time existent, a knowledge also relative to time and the present constitution of the world individually and collectively, and concomitant with that constitution. The divine Knowledge accompanies, step by step, so to speak, advancing time and the development taking place therein, which in the ultimate resort is certainly conditioned by Him, who alone has Aseity. We must therefore say that God also ever knows what is past as past and not as present, and knows the future as not yet being, and that only by that means does He know of the world of *history*, and can He have a relation thereto which is not eternally identical and rigid. And in a

quite similar manner His effective Volition must have a progress. The present is alone real; what is not yet real, God cannot know as real, because He knows the truth. Indeed, if time with its diversities did not exist for God, the world would itself be no developing world—that is, it would not be a world, we should only have a variety of Acosmism. On the other hand, were one and the same thing, which was at first future merely, at a subsequent time present to God and therefore real, and then past, and were each stage absolutely clear, in such circumstances the divine Consciousness of the world and of history would be analogous to the human consciousness. There is a mutation in the divine Consciousness, namely, through its contents which change and through the diverse activity of apprehension requisite for the same; such things as are only known as future enter even for God into the circle of what is known as present and actual, whilst that which is known as present recedes into the circle of what is past. But with this change in His knowledge *there is no mutation in God Himself* given. He remains immutable, Self-identical, *inasmuch as He is*, in the first place, the absolute Power of knowledge; and inasmuch as relatively to the contents He knows eternally and similarly everything possible and impossible as well as that which is conditionally possible; and as far as realization is concerned, inasmuch as He ever sees absolutely through everything, which is actual or present, no less what is past; finally, even the future, at least in so far as it is comprehended and thought, must also lie like the past in the circle of the possible. Then, secondly, —and this is of especial importance,—the mutation in the divine Knowledge, which must also be reflected in His actual Will, exists upon the *basis of a Self-identity of God, penetrating and ethical*, which arranges what is even mutable and actual according to an identical ethical end and universal purpose. So much it is possible to state as to the divine Omniscience in this place, where we cannot speak more precisely upon the divine purpose in the world. But at this point a further and yet more difficult question arises.

5. The relation of the divine Omniscience to the future free acts of the creature, or the DIVINE PRESCIENCE OF FREE AGENTS. —Is it allowable to think of the divine Knowledge in the sense

of a knowledge which is historical and which advances with history, so that God does not know at all beforehand the free acts which will actually take place in the future as such acts as will come to be realized before they have been freely done in time; or is that which is eternally possible, but which has not become realized, immediately separated in God, who knows eternally everything possible, from *those* possibilities which attain realization by the agency of free causalities? That (just as everything necessary and possible, so also everything that will become real is comprehended by the divine Omniscience) in every glance, indeed, all that is actual, the world in its whole realization, lies open before the all-penetrating divine Eye, there is no question amongst Theists. Also, as far as the Prescience of realization is concerned, if all human acts transpired according to an absolute predestination, there would be no doubt that the Omniscience of God would in a manner embrace all future acts even of men because of the Self-intuition of His Will. But if actually free acts are supposed, the old question arises, *Whether God has a Prescience of what He has not done*,—for example, whether it is true of evil, that before the realization of free acts can take effect, God knows it?—Whether, therefore, God eternally knows beforehand not merely the possible, but also free acts which will actually take place? It affords no aid to say, with Schleiermacher, that the actual and the not merely phenomenal is possible and will become actual, and that what is unreal is not in reality possible. For this identification of the actual and the possible would rather substitute the necessary for the possible; and if possibility is absorbed by necessity, there is no moral freedom of choice, and even the evil is necessary. This defence of the all-embracing divine Prescience is not therefore to be called valid. And such coincidence of the divine Knowledge and Volition cannot be taught at all, as evil shows. For God knows evil to be possible, or, if it has found a place in reality, as actual, but He does not will it. God therefore, at all events, knows some things He does not do. But if God's knowledge embraces different things to His Will or to Himself, the question comes: Is God, in such knowledge, so dependent upon the thing known that only by the realization of free acts does He at all perceive that they will take place.

or does He know their certainty of realization previously ? For the divine Providence the question is of little importance, since it will at all times act most conformably with ethical laws, and since nothing can befall it unexpectedly or unawares, if it still surveys all possibilities eternally. As in ancient days Cicero, so, later, the Socinians have supposed the divine Prescience limited, as the consequence of a theory of human freedom, which, forgetful of the dependence of that freedom upon God, supposed God to be limited by man in a deistic manner ; and a similar result follows from a pantheistic mode of thought which construes God as development, as in the case of the *Stoa*.—Without doing homage either to Deism or Pantheism, Rothe and Martensen, on the other hand, suppose, in the interests of human freedom, that the divine Knowledge of the free acts of the creature does not merely first know those acts when they are realized (for it is necessitated by the truth of the divine Knowledge that it should not know those acts to be realized before they are so), but that God does not even know beforehand *that they will become actual* until they have so become ; whilst, concerning all non-volitional forces, He is aware of what they will do, at least so far as they are not set to other work by the influence of volitional forces upon Nature. The question is not so simply solved as many think. The assertion, it is true, of the divine Prescience of what is free upon deterministic or pantheistic grounds, is objectionable, because it makes human freedom a semblance, or thinks God as imperfect and developing. And so the opinion is to be rejected that this Prescience is to be denied, because freedom, once created by God, moves of itself and apart from God, without a possibility of a divine insight and intervention, by which human freedom is supposed to be universally limited. The latter opinion violates the religious interest, and the former the moral. If, then, *thirdly*, rejecting both the preceding views, the divine Prescience of free acts is nevertheless denied, on the ground that the will to create free agents logically and necessarily includes the divine will to limit His action and knowledge from love of freedom, in that case, at all events, the thought of a Self-limitation of God is untenable. For that view would include this, that there is a tendency in God to do everything of Himself alone and to

know everything, even the world of freedom, not generally merely, but *eternally* equal; and His self-limiting Will would oppose that tendency.<sup>1</sup> But that would lead to a dualism in God, and would simply be, in a milder form, an admission of a diminution in God for the sake of the creation and preservation of the world. By the creation of freedom God is not contracted,—He enlarges His sphere of power as well as the sphere of His Will. In order, therefore, to establish the denial of the divine Prescience, it would be necessary to show that the divine Knowledge, according to its proper idea, does not claim to extend beforehand to free agents, possibly just as we might show that the divine Thought does not claim to think illogically, and the divine Will to be able to logically and ethically will the impossible. But that is shown neither by Rothe nor Martensen. It is also not proved that it would be unworthy of God to know beforehand the results of freedom, or to permit prophecy to extend thereto. If that point is weighed, it is impossible to deny this Prescience so resolutely; whilst there may possibly be a point here where the Christian consciousness, where faith—which, in reference to the contents, we called the conscience of Dogmatics—may call for caution. We have, indeed, been compelled to allow that there cannot be supposed in God a knowledge by Self-intuition merely, for otherwise God would have no knowledge of the real world and of its present at any time. If there actually exists in the world other causalities than the mere divine, there must also be conceded a *scientia Dei ascititia*. But the mode of that knowledge is hidden from us. It might then be thought, it is true, that if there actually are free causes, that is saying that they must not merely be causes of the acts wrought by them, but also causes why they may be recognised as causalities which have wrought, or why they are even the solely-adequate causes of their cognizability; so that the divine Knowledge, although it is not passively the effect of their causality, is still conditioned by the fact of their having wrought. Although the effect may be simultaneous with the cause, and need not follow it in time only, still it does not

<sup>1</sup> A divine Self-limitation in reference to the divine Will many have supposed, without inquiring whether an analogous Self-limitation would not be the consequence in reference to the Prescience of what is future and free.

appear to be able to exist *prior* to the working of the cause. And the conclusion might thus be drawn, that the cognizability of an act produced by creaturely freedom, and therefore the cognition of that act, cannot precede the free act of the creature. According to this aspect of the case, we might thus be inclined to suppose a historically progressive knowledge even in the mind of God, so that God first has knowledge of the realization of the free act upon the completion of that realization. But, on the other hand, the method in which God has a *scientia ascititia* is altogether concealed from us. Passages of Scripture like Matt. xi. 21, Ps. cxxxix. 16, Isa. xliii. 9, caution us the more against a hasty conclusion, that we are unable to make any very precise statement upon the constitution of the divine plan of the universe, which cannot in any case be uncertain as relates to its purpose, and therefore a word will be said later (§ 39) upon this question. It is only to be noticed here, that the question itself has no greater bearing and importance if we add to it the *scientia Dei media*, by virtue of which God knows in all possible cases how He is able to attain His final purpose in the world, and how He will accomplish the government of the world generally,—however freedom may decide, even granting that He only had a knowledge of the actual decision of freedom which is simultaneous with that decision. At this stage we are only able to lay down the following points as suggestive positions relative to this question:—

1. Predestinationism is to be excluded, as well as the denial of all creaturely causalities, if a freedom is to remain; but no less, if the Absoluteness of God is to be preserved, must a falsely ethical and deistic mode of thought be excluded.

2. Since God eternally knows all that is possible, future free acts are not to be excluded in every case from the divine Prescience: God at any rate comprehends them as what is possible, since only the possible can become real; by virtue of His *scientia media* He knows in all circumstances His own actions proportionally to the act of the creature, however it may fall out.

3. All that is real is at all times illuminated by the divine Knowledge.

4. But whether there is to be supposed in God a pre-



science of what free acts will really come to pass, or only a vivacity to those acts when realized, at any rate God does not become conscious of their actual *being* before they have become present, He does not know them as present before they have become present; just as, on the other hand, He is previously prepared by His *scientia media* for every possibility of realization.

*Observation.*—It is evident how the attributes of Omnipresence, Eternity, Power, Freedom from Space and Time, attain more spiritual and concrete significance by means of the divine Omniscience.

6. RELATION OF ABSOLUTE INTELLIGENCE TO ABSOLUTE PERSONALITY.—We have seen that the absolute divine Knowledge does not merely have its actuality in the reality of the world, as Pantheism would have it, but that God must have absolute and actual knowledge of Himself in Himself even apart from realization in the world, *i.e.* that God is also absolute *Self-consciousness*. We are thus led on the side of *Intelligence* also to the idea of absolute Personality, just as we were earlier on the side of the divine *Will* (§ 26, 3). But though we are equally compelled and justified to think of the Deity as the Unity of absolute Self-determination and absolute Self-consciousness, or as *absolute personal Spirit*, still the earlier problem left unanswered—"how the divine Absoluteness squares with the divine Personality"—is not yet solved. Personality is of the highest significance for the concepts of the divine Freedom, Wisdom, and Love, and thus for everything which constitutes the Christian concept of God. But if it always remains exposed to the attacks of Deism and Pantheism, since they are able to assert that Absoluteness and Personality are incompatible, still faith in the divine Personality is certainly to be maintained of itself, and, as has been shown, Personality is certainly demanded on the side of the divine Will as well as Knowledge. Still the question is not to be decided at this point, but further investigation is to be made. To prepare the way, we close this Division of our subject with a glance at what has been already won, and also with a presentation of the defects not as yet mastered, the removal of which will alone allow the Godhead to be thought as Christendom worships Him.

7. Thus far we have had to move in the more abstract sphere, with which the Philosophy of Religion is also concerned ; the specifically Christian Doctrine of God does not lie in the sphere of the *Θεῖον* as such. For all that the dialogue between the common reason and the reason as determined by Christianity, which Apologetics has to conduct, has already proceeded a good step onward. A series of false definitions has been rejected, a series of positive definitions has been won. The positive truths established will not be again lost, since, being completed in Christianity, they will receive new illustration. And if what precedes is insufficient for the satisfaction of the Christian consciousness and apprehension, it is nevertheless the *point of junction*, which *Christianity itself presupposes*, indeed, according to John i. 3, Rom. i. 20, Acts xvii. 29, which were given to humanity. What precedes forms the living point, from which the demand for the concept of God perfected in a Christian manner follows. Just for that reason, *the results obtained in the previous inquiry already pertain to the Christian apprehension of God* in the wider sense of the word.<sup>1</sup> If, then, much is still wanting to the settlement of the Doctrine of God, the Christian concept of God will nevertheless have its scientific verification, i.e. will be apprehended in its self-verification, when it is made evident that the specifically Christian is the perfection of what is positive in the *sana ratio* already established. And the apprehension of the *defects*, which have been left in what precedes and which impel further, since they arouse a longing and need for further apprehension, also essentially pertain to what has been already done.

<sup>1</sup> The knowledge that the world of the first creation is preserved in Christianity according to its truth, befits Christian gnosis ; consequently Theology must be able to expound this knowledge, although not as a perfect whole. Thence it follows that the ever-multiplying labours in Dogmatics and Ethics, which would only give what is specifically Christian and thus especially hope to confirm the call to purity, omit much which belongs to the complete inheritance of the Christian, and yield themselves to an indecorous narrowness, which was foreign to ancient Systems of Doctrine from Origen to Schleiermacher. The Christian consciousness is not for a moment adequately described in that way ; for that consciousness preserves in itself what was true in the pre-Christian apprehension of God. It is not silence upon this pre-Christian apprehension, but its correct guidance and animation, which shows its defects, and arouses the conscious apprehension that without Christ the world would be a fragment.

The first definitions—that God is to be thought as absolute Being, Life, Order, Harmony, and Beauty—did not yet transcend Pantheism in its pancosmistic form, according to which God may, notwithstanding, be the internal Essence, Life, and Law of the world. After, then, the idea of justice, which guards limits and distinctions, had established the difference between the spiritual sphere, which embraces Intelligence and Will, and the physical sphere, and had conducted to the spiritual sphere as the seat of absolute worth, it was further found that the question as to the absolute *end* and good, and, at the same time, of the absolute Final Cause, could not possibly lie in the cognitive side of the spirit alone, but in the practical side. Knowledge and science did not prove themselves able of themselves to pass for the absolute end; but the *ethically good* only could so pass, which incorporates knowledge with itself, of course after its own fashion, and transforms it into wisdom by its relation to itself, the concept of absolute end. But as regards this ethically good itself, a twofold problem was left unsolved, namely, how absolute and ethical Being and absolute and ethical Will square with each other, and also, as concerns the contents of good, which is God, how His necessary Self-preservation or Justice and the mediating good harmonize with each other.<sup>1</sup> Only the necessity arose of thinking God as the ethical Absolute, and indeed as absolutely realized good, as actual and positive Holiness, and thus it was no longer possible to stop at the belief that God is merely the moral Potence or Substance of the world, or the absolute ethical *World-spirit* (*Weltgeist*). That absolute ethical realization which pertains to Him He cannot have in the world, but He must have in Himself. By that category we were raised above the world, above the pancosmistic form of Pantheism even in its higher form, and a *Transcendence* of God was reached in the form in which the Hebrew religion first maintained it. And a wholly similar result was shown on the side of knowledge (§ 27, 2, 6). Knowledge, moreover, is not realized in the world absolutely; it thus has its existence in God Himself, in His internal Being. But, assuredly, if Self-consciousness and Self-determination are associated herewith, Personality is demanded for

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 315, 309, 310, 322.

the concept of God, though in that fact it is not yet given how the divine Absoluteness squares with the Personality of God. With the *Transcendence* of the Godhead an important definition is indeed reached, and at the same time one which impels further. In the first place, if God is to be thought in His Transcendence, in His Self-containment, the three problems previously left unsolved disclose themselves: (1) How do the equally necessary forms of Good, Being, and Volition harmonize in God, the absolute realization of the ethically good? (2) How does the divine Justice or Self-preservation square with the divine Self-communication? And finally, (3) how can God be thought to be personal without violation of His Absoluteness? These three questions are intimately connected. Their solution first enables us to define the divine Transcendence with more precision, and, indeed, in such a way that opposite errors may be prevented, by which the results already gained must be always put in question. If, that is to say, we stopped at pure Transcendence of itself, at the mere separation of the concept of God from the concept of the world, or at the divine Self-preservation as contrasted with the world, this Transcendence might assume a double form, and would lead either to Acosmism (for which the world is nothing, and God alone is total being) or to Deism, either of which would render equally little satisfaction.

Mere Transcendence would lead us at once to Acosmism. For if God is simply absolutely transcendent, there is no coherence between Him and the world, the world cannot be derived from Him; if, then, without advance to new definitions, it is simply held that God alone is the sole reality, there only remains for the world a phenomenal existence, Acosmism. In that case God would Himself eternally be and remain the All in absolute Self-sufficiency, and that would again be a kind of *Pantheism*, although not in the pancosmistic form. But if, indeed, the Transcendence and absolute and exclusive Self-sufficiency of God were maintained, but, in order to evade the void and the insufficiency of Acosmism for knowledge and religion, the existence of a solid world being empirically assumed, without this world being itself mediated by the idea of God, then the divine Transcendence must pass over into a dualism, or at least, since dualism is manifestly excluded by the divine

Absoluteness, must pass over into the deistic form,—a mere commonplace Dualism, in order to still maintain a unity somehow. In both cases such (acosmistic or deistic) Transcendence would, instead of securing the purity of the concept of God, introduce such estrangement, such a separation of the concept of God from that of the world, that even the bridge to a formation of the world, or to an intercourse between God and the world such as religion needs, would be consequently destroyed.

But Acosmism and Deism cannot be the correct forms in which to think of the Transcendence of God, for both are always passing over into each other, and, unless new or higher definitions are given of the concept of God, leave us in a position of enigma. Acosmism is always compelled to seek escape from its emptiness by regarding God, it is true, as the sole reality, but for this reason the *essence* of the real world which obtrudes itself empirically, and thus leads back to the deification of the world. But Deism, originally fostering a dualistic element, makes the world so thoroughly independent as contrasted with the divine, that the world occupies the whole foreground of its consciousness, and that God is not recognised as working from out of His Transcendence, or as working within the world. Thus the idea of God dies more and more out of Deism, and in like measure the *main importance* is attached to the world, it becomes somehow deified, and we again unexpectedly stand in a form of Pantheism, although otherwise coloured,—in pancosmistic Pantheism. But the untenableness of Pantheism in its several forms has been previously shown. If, now, this *circular movement* is to be broken through, which conducts from the absolute Transcendence of the divine to Acosmism or to Deism, and thence recurs to Pancosmism, that breach *will result from a more precise definition* of the Transcendence of God already gained and not to be again surrendered, and a *definition indeed* of such a kind that it can *no longer lead either to Acosmism or to Deism*.

The necessity, too, for further definitions, becomes clear from another side—from the fact that the idea of God is manifestly contaminated *as to its attributes* by the acosmistic and deistic concept of God, and that thus the results previously

gained are again brought into question.<sup>1</sup> If Deism makes no further advance beyond its view of the abstract Exaltation and Solity of the supreme Essence, which is opposed to the world, the world is in that case an absolute limitation for God which He cannot surmount; and thus God is not absolute, but limited by the world, and thus homogeneous with the world, if a world exists, and not exalted above it, not transcendent. If God, therefore, is not to be limited, supposing God and the world are only related in an exclusive and limiting manner, only God, not the world, could exist. In this aspect the consistent issue of deistic exclusiveness is only given in *Acosmism*. The latter purchases the non-intermixture of God and the world, the pure Transcendence of God, at the price of a mere negation of the world and the exclusion of a positive relation of God to the idea of the world. It certainly preserves in that way the semblance of the divine Exaltation in a more perfect manner. "God alone is great, God alone is Being," it says, as does Mahommedan Mysticism and especially Persian Pantheism. But more narrowly regarded, every mode of thought, whether acosmistic or deistic, if it wishes by the exclusiveness of its concept of God to obviate His intermixture with the world, unexpectedly finds itself once more in the midst of such intermixture and in contradiction with itself. For if God is in His Being and in all the definitions of His Essence so exclusively opposed to all being other than Himself, and so actually opposed to the possibility of such being, such a concept of God immediately persists in remaining in merely *physical categories*, it is simply a self-centring nature, Egoity, and thus essentially homogeneous with the world as *Nature*; for there may well be in such a concept a Self-volition and a Self-preservation, but Self-communication is alien to it, it is not the kind and good God, and is even *non-volitional*; God would be fettered as by a fate in His solitary Majesty and Reality, in His all-excluding Exaltation and Self-sufficiency. God cannot be at the same time absolutely good and yet desire existence and goodness exclusively for His own advantage, nay, exclude by His idea the possibility of another's sharing His Being and Goodness;

<sup>1</sup> In what follows, the scientific consequences of the critical positions are given, which (§ 9) have been brought forward against the identification and the separation of God and the world, see pp. 120, etc.

that would contradict the non-egoistic and universal essence of goodness. Accordingly, it is impossible to remain satisfied with the pure Transcendence of the idea of God, whether acosmistic or deistic. The call is imperative to so think of God that He transcends absolute Transcendence and solitary Majesty, which of itself would be exclusive. But how is that transcending to come about without the risk of new comminglings of God and the world, which we nevertheless acknowledged to be objectionable? How is God to will a world and to dwell in it? how is He to communicate Himself to it, and yet be eternally distinct from it? *How can He be transcendent and immanent at the same time?* This question, with which we close the First Division of the Doctrine of God, found no answer before Christ either in Heathenism, for there the pantheistic doctrine of Immanence, the direct confusion of God and the world, preponderated; or in Judaism, so far as it did not display the tendency to pass over into Christianity. For in Judaism Transcendence of itself still preponderates. The answer is contained in the *specifically Christian Doctrine of God*, which makes its disclosures by means of the new revelation of God in Christ, and which is certain to Christian faith. For, on the one hand, that doctrine first brings the distinction between God and the world to its highest point. It shows that God is not merely distinct from the world, but also distinguishes Himself from it and it from Himself, inasmuch as He includes in Himself what belongs to absolute Personality, and thus on the ground that He distinguishes Himself from Himself and is perfectly master of Himself. On the other hand, by means of this absolute inalienable Self-mastery of God, this doctrine opens the prospect that God can communicate Himself to the world without Self-detriment, just as He is able to preserve His Being without incommunicativeness.

## SECOND DIVISION.

### THE DOCTRINE OF GOD OR OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

#### A.—THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE.

##### § 28.

AFTER manifold preparations in the Old Testament, the main features of the Doctrine of God as the Triune are given in the New Testament.

LITERATURE.—(Comp. pp. 187–189.)—I. HISTORICAL WORKS:—George Bull, *Defensio fid. Nicænæ*. Baur, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Lehre von der Menschwerdung Gottes und der Trinität*, 3 vols. 1841, etc. Meyer, *Die Lehre v. d. Trinität in ihrer historischen Entwicklung*, 2 vols. 1844. Peip, *Trinitätslehre*, Herzog's *Theol. Realencyclop.* 1862. H. Voigt, *Die Lehre des Athanasius*, 1861. Christlieb, *Johannes Scotus Erigena*. Upon Jak. Böhme, Oetinger, von Baader, Weisse, Schöberlein, K. Ph. Fischer, Hegel, Billroth, Schelling, etc., see pp. 188, 189.—II. SYSTEMATIC WORKS:—Lessing, *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*. Oetinger, *Irdische und himmlische Philosophie*, vol. i. 2. Hamberger, *Gott und seine Offenbarung in Natur und Geschichte*, 1839, especially §§ 2, 3, pp. 37, 47: Of the Essence of God and the divine Ideal-world, the Trinity, the Seven Spirits of God. Upon the divine Ideal-world, also compare Huber, *Joh. Scot. Erigena*, 1861, pp. 220–261. Cudworth, *Systema intellectuale*. Schöberlein, *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1861–1862, and *Geheimnisse des Glaubens*, 1872, pp. 24, etc., 242, etc., 261, etc. A. Günthers, *Vorschule*. Zukrigl, *Wissenschaftliche Rechtfertigung der Trinitätslehre*, 1860; comp. *Tüb. Quartalschrift*, 1849. Kuhn, *Dreieinigkeitslehre*, 1857. Oischinger, *Die christliche Trinitätslehre*, 1850; comp. *Bonner Katholische Vierteljahrschrift*, 1848, 1849. Schelling, *Methods des akademischen Studiums; Freiheitslehre*. Mehring, *Religionsphilosophie*. Deinhardt, *Beiträge*



zur religiösen Erkenntniss, 1844, pp. 85, etc., and his *Abhandlung über den Begriff der Persönlichkeit*. J. H. Fichte, *Die speculative Theologie oder allgemeine Religionslehre*, 1846. At the impulse of Lücke (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1840), the Doctrine of the Trinity again comes under discussion for a time; comp. Nitzsch's answer to Lücke in the same journal, and his *System*, §§ 82, etc., 6th edit. pp. 183–196, 1851; and Weisse's treatise, *Die Trinität als Idealwelt in Gott*. The philosophical *Zeitschrift* of Fichte, jun., 1841, has also treated the Trinitarian question several times. Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube, Schlussabhandlung und Abhandlung u. den Gegensatz der Sabellianischen und der Athanas. Vorstellung von der Trinität*, in the third number of the second volume of the *Theologische Zeitschrift und WW.* Biedermann, *Christliche Dogmatik*, 1869, §§ 170–188, 412–417, 611–616. Lipsius, *Evang. prot. Dogmatik*, 1876, §§ 355, etc., pp. 267–279. Horn, *Versuch einer Entwicklung der immanenten Trinitätslehre*, 1839; re-edited 1862. Twisten, *Vorlesungen*, vol. ii. Sartorius, *Apologie des 1 Artikels der Augsburger Confession*, 2d edit. 1853; and his work, *Die heilige Liebe*, part i. 1851. Von Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, vol. i. pp. 84, etc. Thomasius, *Christi Person und Werk*, 2d edit. vol. i. pp. 57, etc. Lange, *Positive Dogmatik*, 1851, §§ 20, etc. Julius Müller, *Lehre von der Sünde*, vol. ii. pp. 152, etc. Rothe, *Theologische Ethik*, vol. i. pp. 59, etc., 77, etc.; 2d edit. vol. i. pp. 206, etc., § 53. Liebner, *Die christliche Dogmatik aus christologischen Princip*, vol. i. 1, 1849. Martensen, *Dogmatik*, § 56. Plitt, *Evangelische Glaubenslehre nach Schrift und Erfahrung*, 1863, vol. i. pp. 124–160 (Moravian Brethren). Kahnis, vol. ii. pp. 170, etc., 564, etc. Reiff, *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, 1876, vol. i. pp. 332, etc. Frank, *System der christlichen Wahrheit*, vol. i. pp. 144, etc., 1878.

1. After earlier times had hoped to find the complete Doctrine of the Trinity in clear terms in the Old Testament, upon the lead of G. Calixt the opposite opinion became the dominant one, the opinion, namely, that no traces at all are to be found in the Old Testament of the Doctrine of the Trinity; which is countenanced by the fact that the Jews as well as the Mohammedans stumble to-day at the Trinity as a species of Polytheism. But if—and this is the faith of all Christendom—the living idea of God must be somehow thought as trinitarian, it must be initially manifest that the Old Covenant cannot be wanting in traces of the Trinity, seeing that its idea of God is a living or historical idea. If traces are already recognised of the Trinity in

Heathen religions, especially the religions of India, how can they be quite absent in the Hebrew religion? If Jehovah does not merely say, "I am that I am,"<sup>1</sup> but also says, אֲנִי אֲנִי,<sup>2</sup> He contrasts Himself with Himself, and a distinction is thereby made in God as a matter of fact, and a distinction stated at the same time as the declaration of the divine Unity. Or if He says in Isaiah, "I blot out thy transgressions for Mine own sake,"<sup>3</sup> He represents Himself to be His own end when He works. But, apart from anything else, there is of course wanting in such statements the third element, and although there is frequent mention in the Old Testament of the "Spirit of God," of the "Holy Spirit,"<sup>4</sup> nevertheless that Spirit is only either the Spirit of life given by God,<sup>5</sup> or the immanent Basis of all created life. And thus the Spirit of God is only thought as a gift or a power, or He denotes the divine Essence itself as working and dwelling in the world,<sup>6</sup> even as He is the living basis of the Theocracy, animates artists, poets, heroes, judges, kings, and prophets,<sup>7</sup> and leads every theocratic office to that ideal immanent in the divine Inspiration. But in the Old Testament the Spirit of God has not an immediate trinitarian relation, it does not occupy the position of the third member of the Trinity; the Spirit of God only supposes a distinction between God in Himself or in His Transcendence, and God in His relation to the world.<sup>8</sup> The distinctions in the Old Testament are not so much thought of ontologically as economically, although there is given a distinction of God from God in the distinction of His essential Being and His external Activity. The divine Activity as the Spirit is represented as uniting the world with God, whilst in the Theologoumena of the Word of God and the Angel of Jehovah the divine revelation is conceived as revelation objectively opposed to man. With more definiteness than the doctrine of the Spirit of God, the Theologoumena in the Old Testament—of the Word

<sup>1</sup> Ex. iii. 14.<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxii. 39.<sup>3</sup> Isa. xliii. 25.<sup>4</sup> e.g. Gen. i. 3, vi. 3; Ps. li. 11, 12.<sup>5</sup> Ps. civ. 29; Job xxvii. 3, xxxiv. 14.<sup>6</sup> Isa. xxxi. 15, xlii. 1, xlii. 3, lxi. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 27, xxxix. 29; Joel ii. 28.<sup>7</sup> Num. xi. 17, 25; Deut. xxxiv. 9; Isa. lxiii. 10.<sup>8</sup> Comp. Kahnis, *Die Lehre vom H. Geist*, 1847, vol. i.; von Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, vol. i.; Oehler, *Theologie A. T.*, 1873; Ewald, *Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes*, 1871.

of God, of the *Mal'each* and of the Wisdom of God, lead to the distinction between God in Himself and God in revelation, wherein lies the basis for the knowledge of distinctions in God Himself. The distinction between God in Himself and God in the world is established in those three Theologoumena in reference to the divine Creation, Government, and Providence.

**THE WORD OF GOD.** In the Chaldee Paraphrast, *Memra*. Even in Gen. i. 1, the world comes into existence by the agency of the speech, the word of God, and later on it is regarded as the creative principle. By the word of the Lord are the heavens made, and all their hosts by the breath of His mouth.<sup>1</sup> The word as the thing sent is distinguished from God as the sender. The word sent and spoken has of course a mere relation to the world first of all. But it leads to the distinction between God in His essence and repose and in His activity in the world, between His immanence in Himself or His transcendence and His immanence in the world; and this distinction itself leads to a further step, since on the one hand God reveals something different to Himself in the world, and on the other hand, what is revealed, the Being and Actuality of God in the world, must be believed to correspond with His Being in itself. If it is shown that God does not everywhere reveal Himself in the world in the same but in different ways, the distinctions in the natural world must lead back to distinctions in God Himself, and indeed in such a way, that a security is ever given in the divine Being in itself against confusion with the world.

**THE MAL'EACH.** It is already said of the word that it is sent of God; that divine mission is fixed in the *Mal'each*. It is insufficient to understand by him simply a creaturely angel (such as Michael), although certain passages are to be understood as speaking of an angel side by side with God.<sup>2</sup> Abraham regards the appearance of the *Mal'each* as a manifestation of God.<sup>3</sup> The Name of Jehovah, that is, His Self-revealing Essence, is in him, Jehovah Himself, as it were in person, so far as he represents Him. God's face itself Moses

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 6, cvii. 20; comp. Wisd. xvi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 2, 3, the angel and not I; Gen. xviii. 20, 26; one of the three men is distinguished from the two others, who are called *Mal'each*.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxiv. 40; comp. xxxi. 11, 12, xxxv. 7.

and Elias may not see.<sup>1</sup> But in the *Mal'each* there is nevertheless an actual divine revelation, and thus it is also said that Jehovah is seen (*i.e.* in the *Mal'each*).<sup>2</sup> This *Mal'each* is also called the Angel of the Presence or of the Covenant, indeed Jehovah Himself, because He acts through him.<sup>3</sup> The Angel of the Face is not Jehovah's face itself, which cannot be beheld.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, Jehovah does not wish to be absent, but He will lead the people invisibly by means of him whom He calls His face,<sup>5</sup> the *Mal'each*, who is a Theophany, and is therefore called the Angel of the Face. The latter term expresses the divine Presence, and may thus be called the Messenger of the Presence or of the Person of God. Such messengers of His presence are the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud, the burning bush, and other things.<sup>6</sup> The *preparatory standpoint* of the Old Testament carries along with it the fact that the internal Essence of God is not as yet manifest, or that the form of revelation is not yet equal to its contents, and therefore various symbolic forms are possible. When it is stated of Moses that God spake to him mouth to mouth, or that he saw the form of God,<sup>7</sup> the personal but symbolic presence of the invisible God is meant.

The WISDOM of God (*Chokhmah*).<sup>8</sup> This already exists in the world as the teleological principle from the creation,<sup>9</sup> just as *דבר* is the real causal principle, whilst the *Mal'each* is related to the revelation of God in history, and thus to His universal Government. This Wisdom is represented in the Proverbs as very self-dependent:—"She played ever before God; her joy is among the sons of men." God brought me forth, she says, before the hills.<sup>10</sup> So strongly is this put in the Apocrypha, that Wisdom is associated with the divine Word of command, the creative Word, also called *ῥῆμα Θεοῦ*. This *ῥῆμα Θεοῦ*, which is also found in the New Testament, and is

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 20, 23; comp. xix. 21, 22; 1 Kings xix. 11-13.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Ex. xxxiii. 11, Num. xii. 8, Deut. xxxiv. 10, are to be taken.

<sup>3</sup> Judg. vi., xiii.; Isa. lxiii. 9; Mal. iii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 20-23.

<sup>5</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Ex. iii. 2, xiii. 21; comp. xiv. 24, xxiii. 26; Judg. ii. 1-5.

<sup>7</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 11; Num. xii. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Comp. Oehler, *Die Grundzüge der A. T. Weisheit*, 1854.

<sup>9</sup> Prov. viii.; comp. Job xxxviii., etc.; Sir. i. and xxiv.; Wisd. vii.

<sup>10</sup> Prov. viii. 24.

used in the Hebrews<sup>1</sup> as identical with the λόγος, is changed in Philo into the more frequent expression λόγος, in such a way, indeed, that with him the former of the two meanings of λόγος (reason and word) preponderates according to his Hellenizing method over the real meaning of the creative word. The Book of Wisdom calls the σοφία the ἔσσηπτον of God. That surely does not mean that God Himself beholds Himself by virtue of Wisdom, but the σοφία effused into the world may be called His mirror, in so far as His Wisdom impresses and reflects itself in the wisely ordered world. Philo speaks of the λόγος as if He were a person distinct from God ἀρχάγγελος, ἀρχιερεύς, δεύτερος Θεός. But whether the hypostasizing of the λόγος was in earnest, or a mere personification, is doubtful. The λόγος is also in his esteem the κόσμος νοητός. But thus much is certain, the λόγος expresses in his view something actually distinct from God, but he places it without the divine sphere as a subordinate being; for his God is the abstract Ὀν, which allows no distinctions whatever to penetrate within it, but at most allows them to play upon it from the world.

*Observation.*—At the time of Christ, a similar meaning to the Mal'each<sup>2</sup> pertained to the Shechina also (the δέξα), or the מְשִׁכָּה; the Shechina was the medium of divine revelation in the sensuous world, as well as the radiance which surrounded God.

2. NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE.—Dogmatics distinguishes between passages which expressly (κατὰ ῥητόν) afford evidence in favour of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and passages which afford such evidence if their sense be regarded (κατὰ διάνοιαν). Among the former, the *Baptismal Formula*<sup>3</sup> comes first. It is true that the formula βαπτίζειν εἰς Χριστόν also occurs, but the standing Baptismal Formula of the Church, in any case attributable to Christ, is the trinitarian, a circumstance conclusively shown by the fact that the Ebionites sought to explain the formula in an antitrinitarian manner, yet did not venture to discard it, although it has its inconveniences for a unitarian mode of thought. Even the formula

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 1-3, xi. 3, compared with iv. 11, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Isa. vi.; John xii. 41, i. 14; 2 Pet. i. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

of βαπτίζειν εἰς Χριστόν, seeing that it gives to Christ a form of worship, does not harmonize with the Monarchian mode of thought. Let us regard more closely the significance of the Triad in the Baptismal Formula. Some say it does not point to a threefold *basis* of the economy of salvation, but that one simple basis alone of salvation is to be understood together with instrumental or intermediate causes. So the Judaizing Monarchians teach, and the Arians, Socinians, and Rationalists.<sup>1</sup> Others say that we are baptized in the name of a threefold work in the economy of salvation, and not in the name of the cause of that work; so say the Sabellian Monarchians, who understand by the Father the work of creation, by the Son the work of the redeeming God, and by the Holy Ghost the work of sanctification. But these explanations are untenable. "Son and Spirit" stand side by side with πατήρ in the Formula, they are co-ordinate therewith, and εἰς ὄνομα has in baptism a religious significance. Baptism is to be no less in the name of the Son and Spirit than in the name of the Father; indeed, baptism according to the formula βαπτίζειν εἰς Χριστόν (Rom. vi. 3; Acts ii. 38) commenced, it may be said, by baptizing in the name of the Son alone, rather than in the name of the Father alone, because the Son, as the mediating member, points to the Father and the Spirit. By that fact Subordinationism is excluded. And many considerations conflict with the Sabellian explanation, which sees in the words Father, Son, and Spirit, three works or revelations merely of the one God. But if the Father, as well as the Son and Spirit, is a *work*, who *does* the work? In that case, there would be no mention at all of one who acts, and instead of the words of the text we should necessarily expect the words:—"I baptize thee in the name of the one God, who has revealed Himself as Father in the creation, and has also revealed Himself as Son and Spirit." In that case the Threæ might pass for the forms of revelation of the One. But there is not in the Baptismal Formula a unity superior to the three names and comprehending them, but baptism, the

<sup>1</sup> Wegscheider, *Instit.*, 3d edit. § 93: "God as Father, namely of men, has revealed Himself by Jesus, His ambassador, and strengthens us by the Holy Spirit, i.e. the ministry of Christianity, by means of which we become wise and virtuous."

religious act, is one, since it relates equally to the three, and the first member of the Triad, the Father, is co-ordinate therein with the Son and Spirit. Further, the word Father in the Baptismal Formula does not express a relation to men, but the co-ordination of Father and Son requires us to regard the Father as the Father of the Son, and the Son as the Son of the Father, and therefore does not signify a paternal relation to the world in general, but to the Son, who, standing between the Father and the Spirit, must be somehow thought as pertaining to the divine sphere, and therefore denotes a distinction in the sphere of the divine itself, and thus a relation of God to Himself. And to this a further consideration may be added: the method of expression in the Baptismal Formula has nothing at all to do with laying the main stress upon the work of God, it lays that stress upon God Himself, Father, Son, and Spirit. If revelations of God merely were meant by the words Father, Son, and Spirit, these revelations could not be regarded as mere *works*, in which God would not exist in different ways. With such phraseology, a point of view could alone harmonize which saw in those three forms of revelation, not a threefold work of God merely, but a being of God. But this Being must be a threefold being, if the distinctions in the revelations are not to flow back into mere subjective modes of consideration, or the triplicity of the work itself to become semblance. This form of Sabellianism leads back, therefore, to objective distinctions in God. If more precise definitions are likewise wanting in the Baptismal Formula, it cannot, however, be said that that formula gives a mere Trinity of revelation, and that it expresses mere phases of the constitution of the universe attributed to Deity. A Trinity, which was only of an economic kind, would be no revelation of God Himself, it would be at most a revelation of the divine Will, which, not being at the same time a revelation of the divine Essence, must be contingent to the latter, or must resolve itself into mere phases of the constitution of the universe, behind which God would Himself remain concealed. Thus it follows, that certainly as Monotheism claims to be maintained by Christianity,<sup>1</sup> it is also certain that, according to Matthew, we are

<sup>1</sup> 1 John v. 20; John xvii. 3; Gal. iii. 20; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Jas. iv. 12.

not to acknowledge and honour a God thought of in a merely Monarchian manner, nor a mere triple activity of that one God, but a Threefold Causality, whence results, therefore, an objective, and not a mere subjective distinction.<sup>1</sup>

As far as the APOSTOLIC doctrine is concerned, the well-known passage 1 John v. 7 is not convincing without the spurious addition in the following verse: *καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ οὐρανῷ*. The question would also have to be asked: In what are the three one? In Essence or in witness (ver. 8)? Even in the teaching of Sabellianism the three revelations are interconnected. On the other hand, the Pauline passage is more relevant:<sup>2</sup> "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit," a formula of benediction early adopted in the Church. It cannot be denied that the Triad here mentioned forms a parallel to the Triad of the Baptismal Formula. Wishing to commend the Corinthian Christians to the true and living God, and to the fulness of His grace, Paul makes use of this formula of the Triad. Seeing that he thus commends the Christians to the grace of Christ and the love of God equally, there is contained in that blessing a religious co-ordination of the *Χριστός* and the *Θεός*. For *χάρις* is, according to the New Testament, the divine principle,<sup>3</sup> whilst Christ is regarded as able to be its channel. Thus Christ is not thought of as created merely. But neither can the meaning of the apostle be, that he commends them to God, inasmuch as God has revealed Himself in Christ and the Holy Spirit. For in that case God must stand at the head, and not in the middle. The Sabellian mode of thought is unable to co-ordinate Christ and the Holy Spirit with *Θεός*, as is manifestly done according to the grammar of the passage; for according to the Sabellian mode of thought, *Θεός* is rather the Monad, the Unity relatively to the three revelations. There would also be wanting in that passage a reference to the divine form of revelation as Father. The co-ordination of Christ in the

<sup>1</sup> This also follows from John iii., where the Father is to be understood by the God who has the kingdom (ver. 3), and by the God who sends Christ (ver. 16), the Father being side by side with the *μεγαλὸς* (vv. 13, 16) and the Holy Spirit (vv. 3, 5, 8).

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>3</sup> John i. 17; Matt. ix. 4-6; Col. ii. 13.



passage can only be allowably explained by saying, that side by side with His historical and human side, there is also in Christ a divine Being co-ordinate with the *Θεός* and *πνεῦμα*. From the standpoint of the ecclesiastical doctrine of the Trinity, it must, of course, be remarkable, that whilst *Χριστός* is thus co-ordinated with the two other names, the third member side by side with *Χριστός* and *πνεῦμα*, and therefore that which is otherwise called Father, has, notwithstanding, alone the name of *Θεός*. But that is *dogmatically* explained in this way, that it is characteristic of the Father to be God *only*, and not to become human,—to have only a divine Being, and not a historical Being as well, like the *πνεῦμα* and the divine in Christ. *Historically* it is explained thus: in the Old Testament the name of Father does not refer to God at all in the sense of the first Person in the Trinity. But in the New Testament, where the Father, even when the word is meant in the trinitarian sense, of course still has the name of God preponderatingly, and where the Son and Spirit only gradually branch off, so to speak, from the idea of the God of the Old Testament, it was but natural that that divine Person who sends the Son and the Spirit—that is to say, the Father—should nevertheless retain pre-eminently the name of God. Only gradually did the mode of expression come definitely to mean that God as the original Principle of all revelation, and as the object of mediation, was called Father. This is seen in the prologue to John, where it is only stated (ver. 1), “The Word was with God,” a manifest reference to the Father according to ecclesiastical usage, whilst the expression embraces in itself the whole Godhead. Nevertheless the passage continues: “The Word was God.” Finally, in ver. 18 the same Being *with* whom the Word was, according to ver. 1, is more distinctly and precisely called *Father*,—a clear proof that if at times the Father is called God simply, still the divine character is not thereby denied to the Word and the Spirit. On the contrary, the transitional formula is found very early which adds to *Θεός*, when the first Principle in the Godhead is meant thereby, the limiting and more definitive designation *πατήρ*, *Θεός πατήρ*,<sup>1</sup> whether God is signified thereby as our

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 1, 3; Eph. iii. 14, vi. 23; Phil. ii. 11; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4; Jas. iii. 9 (*Θεὸς πατήρ*).

Father<sup>1</sup> or as the Father of Jesus Christ; wherefore the formula frequently occurs: Θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, God who is also the Father of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> Where the expression is more accurate, the God who sends Christ is called πατὴρ, not merely in John, but in other writers.<sup>3</sup>

Another leading passage is 1 Cor. xii. 4-6: "There are diversities (distributions) of *charismata*, but one Spirit. There are diverse ministries (*διακονία*), but one Lord. There are diverse revelations of power (*ἐνεργήματα*), but there is one and the same God, who worketh all in all." Θεός is here, again, the Father; κύριος, Christ; the Holy Spirit is presupposed, because charismata are in question which pertain to Him first of all. For all that, all three divine Principles are brought into relation with the charismata; and the latter form in their diversity a self-completing and harmonious unity and order, inasmuch as they all point back to the one God, although to different Principles in Him. So far as they are the effects of power, they refer to the creative causality of the Father; so far as they are divinely-animated and divinely-endowed natural forces, they point back to the Holy Spirit; and so far as they are destined to serve the σῶμα Χριστοῦ and to receive from Christ the norm and rule of their working, they point back to the κύριος. Of course the starting-point is fixed in this passage at divine effects and revelations, and there is no immediate mention of the Triad of Essence. But these effects are referred to three divine Principles, which nevertheless form a unity. It is otherwise with Rom. xi. 36: "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him (*εἰς αὐτόν*), are all things." This cannot be allowably referred directly to the immanent Trinity, but it has reference to the world, its origin, mediation, and end. That with this triplicity something in God Himself, a threefold internally-divine Principle, corresponds,—the Principle of Existence, the Principle of Mediation, and the teleological Principle,—is not stated in the passage; its purpose rather is, to subsume the plurality in the world and in its changing epochs beneath the unity of the divine working.

<sup>1</sup> Jas. i. 27; Eph. iv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 24; 2 Cor. i. 3, xi. 31; Eph. i. 3, v. 20; Col. i. 3 (l. 12, ii. 27); Rev. i. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xiii. 32; Matt. xi. 27; Gal. iv. 4-6.

On the other hand (1 Cor. viii. 6), the *ἐξ αὐτοῦ* and *εἰς αὐτόν*—origin and end—are assigned to the one *Θεὸς πατήρ*; and Christ is definitely thought of as the mediating Principle. *Εἰς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτόν*. There is no mention in this verse of the Holy Spirit.—There is thus in the words of Christ and of His Apostles sufficiently illustrative ground for the fact that the Christian idea of God expressed in dogmatic form becomes trinitarian, and that according to the N. T. a Threefold Causality of salvation is to be supposed, and not merely different divine favours, or different subjective conceptions of one living God, still less distinctions thought of in a merely Arian fashion.

3. But besides the well-known comprehensive passages, there is a number of others which make statements concerning the Son and Spirit as well as concerning the Father, which, on the presupposition of Monotheism, could only be made if God were triune.

We do not wish to mention here the numerous passages which must receive a more precise consideration in our Christology, or those which, however high the predicates attributed to Christ in reference to essence, attributes, and works, still may be of themselves understood as not attributing eternal distinctions between the divine in Christ and the divine generally, and which rather permit the supposition that God is in Himself merely and absolutely a simple Monad, but that from love He has given Himself in Christ a perfect and manifest Being in the world of reality. But it is otherwise with the passages which give expression to a pre-existence of the divine in Christ. They are incompatible with a Sabellian mode of thought.<sup>1</sup> A few of these may possibly be referred to a pre-existence in the mere divine counsel, but certainly all cannot be. As far as the designation Son (*υἱός*) is concerned, it may not of course be of itself referred without examination to the divine pre-existent Principle in Christ; but, seeing that in 1 Cor. x. 4, 9 and Heb. xi. 26 there is an antedating of the name *Χριστὸς κύριος*, properly belonging, notwithstanding, to

<sup>1</sup> The main passages for the pre-existence of Christ, as to the higher aspect of His Nature, are: John i. 1-3; 1 John i. 1, etc.; Rev. xxii. 13, 16 (A and α); John viii. 56, xvii. 5. Further: John iii. 13, vi. 33, 35, 40, 46. In Paul's writings: 1 Cor. x. 4, 9; Gal. iv. 4; Heb. i. 1, etc., iv. 12.

His historical Person, to the premundane Principle in Him, the same thing may be true of the word Son. The second divine Principle will of course have first received His name from the revelation in Jesus Christ, who originally has this name, just as in a quite similar manner the word λόγος demonstrably referred originally (Rev. xix. 11) to the historical revelation in Jesus. But as the Logology of John i. applies the word λόγος also to the pre-existing Principle of Speech, the same thing happens with υἱός, and it can be still less asserted that υἱός is exclusively a designation for the human in Jesus. It is by no means sufficient to think the divine Principle, intended by υἱός, as arising at the same time as, or for the sake of, the manifestation of Christ. Gal. iv. 4 especially shows this, if 1 Cor. x. 4, 9 does not do so with certainty: "In the fulness of time God sent His Son, born of a woman." It is rightly to be borne in mind that Paul could only speak thus if he thought of the Son as already somehow existent before the sending; His Being precedes His birth of a woman, which is at the same time a sending forth from God, and thus the divine Principle who is sent is already called Son in this passage. That fact is also corroborated by all the passages which suppose Him who is called the Son to have been effective in the creation of the world.<sup>1</sup> But if the pre-existence of the "Son" before the creation of the world is exegetically established, we already have before the coming of Christ—indeed, before the birth of the world—a real Principle distinct from God as the Father, although still embraced by the Godhead; and the only question remaining is: Is it the sense of the New Testament that this Principle is only extant and supposed for the sake of the purpose of the divine revelation of the world, i.e. that God made Himself triune merely for the sake of the world,<sup>2</sup> or is there also in God Himself this plurality of diverse Principles? The famous passage in the Epistle to the Colossians<sup>3</sup> decides clearly between these two possibilities. The beloved Son is painted at full length by means of predicates of two kinds. In the first place, by traits of a historical kind, and next, by such as

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 1-3; Col. i. 13-20.

<sup>2</sup> Von Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, I. p. 177, 1st edit.; p. 233, 2d edit.

<sup>3</sup> Vv. 14, 18, 19.

are related to His priority to creation.<sup>1</sup> In reference to the latter, it is said: He is *εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου*, the first-born of the whole creation; everything is created for Him in heaven and on earth, everything is through Him and unto Him. The passage closes comprehensively:<sup>2</sup> "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." He must be the First in all things, and therefore in the Resurrection even, a circumstance doubtless relating not merely to rank, but to time. If, then, as granted, the *name* Son may be dated as prior to the historical world, still the passage affirms a real pre-existence of the divine Principle in Jesus; and this Principle not simply has a relation to the extant or potential world, like *Ἰησοῦς* and *κύριος*, but He is so thought as supramundane and before all time, that He has a relation to the eternal God, inasmuch as He is even called the image of the invisible God, and the same Principle, who is the Son on earth, has thus an eternal relation before all worlds to Him who is called the Father. It is just the same when Christ is called the *A* and *Ω*. It is not said of this pre-existent Principle that He is a *δευτερος Θεός*, but He is also not described as one who has no share at all in spirituality and personality, merely phenomenal, or a mere force, for otherwise He could not be called the image of God; consequently the fact is conveyed by that statement, that before all worlds and before all time, and therefore in Himself, God confronts Himself with His image, who is called in human language (Rev. xix. 12, 13) the Son or the Word; and the form of God in humanity, or the perfect realization of God, radiates from the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. iv. 6). And John narrates as the words of Jesus, that the one side of His nature, which has united itself with Him to form the unity of the person, possessed the divine glory before the world was.<sup>3</sup> A similar statement is made by the Epistle to the Hebrews:<sup>4</sup> He "has in these last days spoken by His Son, whom He has made heir of all things, by whom also He made the world." And it is further said,<sup>5</sup> that it is as the radiance of His glory and the impression of His original Being (*χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως*

<sup>1</sup> Vv. 15-17.<sup>2</sup> Ver. 17.<sup>3</sup> John xvii. 5. John viii. 56 is to be similarly expounded.<sup>4</sup> Heb. i. 1, 2.<sup>5</sup> Ver. 3.

αὐτοῦ), as well as the creative and sustaining Principle (bearing all things by His mighty word), that He is in a position to become the Restorer (the Atoner). But the most striking passage in favour of the Deity of the Principle who appeared in Jesus, and in favour of the eternal reality of the distinction between this Principle and God generally, the passage which Athanasius justly called insuperable, is the prologue to John's Gospel.<sup>1</sup> For in this passage, with the greatest simplicity and precision, there is expressed both the eternal distinction in God "in the very beginning" (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν),<sup>2</sup> and also the unity in the distinction between the λόγος and God. Although Θεός is the predicate in the words "Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος," and the sense is "the Logos was divine Essence—Deity," still the preceding sentence, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God," is a warranty for the fact that the predicate Θεός is not to be merely taken in a moral sense, or as a mere name for a subordinate or created subject, but that it is to be taken in the sense of the divine Being, of a really existent divine Principle, whereby every form of Subordinationism is excluded; just as, on the other hand, the πρὸς τὸν Θεόν shows that the λόγος is no mere attribute or revealing act of a Sabellian kind.<sup>3</sup> The πρὸς, again, does not exclude the unity on its side, inasmuch as the λόγος is not therefore thought as a power able to exist and endure for its own sake, is not thought as divided from God, but figuratively as eternally turning towards God. Thus the way is pointed out by this passage for the ecclesiastical development of the Doctrine of the Λόγος. Bounds are erected right and left, between which the adjustment of the unity and the diversity, which is, of course, still to be sought, may be prosecuted. Even the conclusion:<sup>4</sup> "The Only-begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has revealed Him," does not say He who is *now* exalted to the Father; the words εἰς τὸν κόλπον are meant to establish that He can be the ἐξηγητής of God, in accord with His essential relation to

<sup>1</sup> John i. 1-3, 14, 18.

<sup>2</sup> This recalls Prov. viii. 30.

<sup>3</sup> The Λόγος is, however, by no means described by such a statement as a single, personal individual in the sense of our use of words, as a personal totality of Himself and apart from Θεὸς πατήρ.

<sup>4</sup> i. 18. The Egyptian reading: *μονογενὴς Θεός*, is yet more conclusive; comp. Hort upon the passage.

the Father. The passage thus expresses a relation in God Himself, and the reference here is not to the Father in relation to the paternal sentiment of God towards man, but in relation to the *μονογενής*. Accordingly, we may allowably speak of Fatherhood and Sonship as a relation of God to Himself, without forgetting by such a statement the figurative element in human speech. Indeed, in this heavenly relation, by which God is the Father of Jesus Christ, and thus our Father, we have the basis of all paternity and sonship upon earth.<sup>1</sup>

But if the Apostles thus speak of Christ, nay, if He Himself thus co-ordinates His Essence with God, it cannot be surprising if the higher principle in Christ, or if Christ because of that principle, is called God.<sup>2</sup> It is established, by what has been said, that the teaching of the New Testament distinguishes between God as Father and God as Son, whilst it also maintains the unity of both.

As regards the Holy Spirit, one profound Pauline passage stands pre-eminent.<sup>3</sup> The very apprehension of God is there referred to the *πνεῦμα Θεοῦ*, who works in God the knowledge of Himself, just as He is in the world the source of true Christian knowledge. The revelation of the Spirit in the world presupposes accordingly the immanent Being of the Spirit in God, and is thereby established. His distinction from the Son might possibly be stated as an objection, since the Son is also called *πνεῦμα*: "The Lord is the Spirit,"<sup>4</sup> and since according to Paul, as well as Matthew and Luke,<sup>5</sup> the higher Principle in Christ is also called *πνεῦμα ἁγίου*, *πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης*, to say nothing about Christ's baptism.<sup>6</sup> But God generally is also called *πνεῦμα*,<sup>7</sup> and thus God when operative in the world is also *πνεῦμα* according to the Old Testament usage; but in a more vague mode of expression, to be accurately distinguished from the more exact trinitarian

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Tit. ii. 13, *Θεῷ* is to be most naturally associated grammatically with *σάρκα*, because of the article wanting before the latter; comp. 1 Cor. x. 5, 9; Rom. xiv. 9, 11; Heb. i. 8. In Rom. ix. 5, the reference to Christ of the *ἐν ᾧ πάντες* *Θεός*, is also the most natural.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. i. 8; Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35; comp. Heb. ix. 14.

<sup>6</sup> John i. 32.

<sup>7</sup> John iv. 24.

idea of *πνεῦμα*. With sufficient clearness the distinction between the Spirit and the Father and Son appears in other passages,<sup>1</sup> where the Spirit is described as sent by Christ.<sup>2</sup> And Christ Himself speaks in a similar manner.<sup>3</sup> In being sent by the Son, there can be just as little implied a dependence upon His Being, as, on the other hand, a superiority of the Spirit to the Son can be allowably inferred from the history of the baptism,<sup>4</sup> or a superiority of the Spirit to God from 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. The sending of the Holy Spirit by the Son merely expresses in figurative language that internal logical relation which exists between the revelation of God through Christ and the revelation in the Holy Spirit. At every stage of religion the latter has His work in the world, and prepares the way for the perfecting of revelation in Christ by animating and developing the internal susceptibility of mankind for the indwelling of the divine in general; but the highest revelation of the Holy Spirit in the world, the revelation in the soul, is conditioned by the perfecting of the objective revelation in Christ. Pentecost follows the exaltation of Christ.<sup>5</sup> This logical relation of the dependence of the perfect revelation of the Spirit upon that of the Son affords no reason for the subordination of the Holy Spirit. Still His divinity is not easily doubted. On the other hand, the question arises, whether He is not thought of in the New Testament as mere power? Of course the word also frequently occurs as a mere divine power, even when applied to the Person of Christ.<sup>6</sup> But to be power is not the same thing as to be impersonal, so that passages which describe the Spirit as power do not prove that He is not also the power of the personal God in the Holy Spirit. But the distinction between the Son and the Spirit is clear from the Baptismal Formula, and from the valedictory words in John: "I will pray the Father, and He will send you another intercessor."<sup>7</sup> The *παράκλητος*, in whom an aid, a spiritual help in lieu of their weakness, is promised, is, it is true, a figurative expression, but cannot be understood as a mere gift of salva-

<sup>1</sup> Together with the above-mentioned passages, Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> John xvi. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Or Matt. xii. 32.

<sup>5</sup> John xvi. 7, 14, vii. 39; Acts i. 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> John iii. 34.

<sup>7</sup> John xiv. 16, 27, xv. 26, 27, xvi. 7-12; comp. 1 John ii. 1.



tion or a mere power. The expression has a personal meaning, so that it leads back to God as the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless there is not, of course, contained in the figurative character of the mode of speech<sup>1</sup> (and thus Monotheism is confirmed thereby) the statement that the Holy Spirit is a divine Individual, separate and existing for His own sake only, any more than it is stated that He is another power; it is only said that God is personally present in Him otherwise than in Christ.<sup>2</sup> The result may be *therefore* stated as follows. The Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, by the words of the Apostles and of Jesus Himself, impart sufficient impulse to Christendom, that it does not simply take over the pre-Christian doctrine of God in its traditional form. It is compelled to see so great a force in Christianity, that the very idea of God must be formed anew within its own borders by the revelation in Christ. There belongs to the original consciousness of the Christian Church, as well as to the self-consciousness of Christ regarded in a purely historic manner, this,—that the distinction between the revelation in the Son and the Holy Spirit given by Christianity and everything pre-Christian, is so great and so deep, as to reach back to the depths of Deity itself, and to point to eternal distinctions in God, in which the historic Christian revelation has its fundamental explanation, and is made firm at the roots.

#### B.—THE ECCLESIASTICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

##### § 29.

The Christian doctrine of the triune God did not originate in the extra-Christian world, but its essential contents have passed over from the objective Christian revelation into the consciousness of Christian faith, whilst its ecclesiastical conception has arisen from the labour of Christian apprehension. In the course of long-continuing struggles with the possible unitarian doctrines of God, the Church has gained the conviction that it has thus long remained

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> So Rom. viii. 16; Eph. iv. 30; 1 Cor. xii. 11.

a sufferer from Heathen or Jewish elements, and cannot consciously preserve its inheritance of faith, until it transcends Monarchianism of every kind, and has attained the idea of God as the Triune.

*Observation.*—Since Dogmatics, the creation of the believing spirit which has united itself with the Scriptures, has to do not with the expository verification of the faith of an individual, but with the faith of the true Christian Church extant through all times, monuments of that common faith remain, and it is therefore appropriate to consider this faith, which desires to be apprehended in its verification, not only in the microcosmic form of the personal experience of faith, but also in the macrocosmic form of the common faith of the Church. If in this form the imprinted element of the personal certainty of faith is wanting, since the common faith may possibly become degraded to a mere ecclesiastical tradition of a doctrinal inheritance, nevertheless there has been in all times of the Church a personal experience of faith; and the trinitarian doctrine of the Church opposed to the pre-Christian mode of faith has especially arisen from an internal unanimity of believers, who attained self-knowledge and coalesced more consciously in the common expression when found. And although there still remained to personal faith the privilege and duty of purifying where necessary the ecclesiastical form of doctrine, it nevertheless is the part of this personal faith to ally itself with the great labours of the Church in behalf of the apprehension of this faith and with the results of these labours, to study the providential course of the entire history of these labours, and to consciously appropriate its own fruits. Only thus can we consciously stand in our historical position, and know the dogmatic labour bequeathed to us.

1. Origin of the Ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Trinity in general. From the days of Souverain's *Platonism of the Fathers* to more modern times, it has been repeated by many that this doctrine owes its origin to the Platonic philosophy merely, in its Alexandrian union with Jewish theology. That Hellenism has exercised an influence upon the history of the doctrine in question is not to be denied, although at the beginning the Stoic philosophy influenced far more than the Platonic,<sup>1</sup> and the supposition of a Platonic Triad in God, which would be

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos*, 1872.

thus assumed, is not established; the Christian faith in the Triune God by no means owes its origin to external influence. Rather is it the dogma of the Trinity, by means of which the Christian idea of God has established and secured itself in opposition to the abstract unity in the Monotheism of unbelieving Judaism, and in opposition to the unlimited and unordered plurality in heathen Polytheism, which philosophically reconducts to a pantheistic unity; in other words, in opposition to self-engrossed Exaltation or Transcendence, and to the impotent Self-surrender of the eternal God to the world and its plurality, and then the false Immanence of God in the world.<sup>1</sup> Every religion gives expression to its essence in its idea of God. The Christian idea of God, historically regarded, is decidedly the trinitarian.<sup>2</sup> Therefore in the phenomenon, that the long early struggles with Heathen and Jewish elements within the Church concerned this doctrine and conditioned its construction, and in the fact that in the days in which the Church gained its self-consciousness as opposed to the other religions by hard wrestling, this dogma claimed the most strenuous spiritual labour and the noblest forces of the Church, we may see a proof at the outset, that in this dogma the fundamental Christian view of God is contained, and that in those centuries the Christian idea of God was conceived according to its characteristic essence by thought upon faith.

In fact, in early days the Doctrine of the Trinity—of course without distinguishing at first an ontological from an economic Trinity—constituted the sacred sign of distinction between Christians and non-Christians. It was and is the doctrine, which appears prominently in that act which denotes a secession from an old life and an entrance upon a new and Christian life—in Baptism.<sup>3</sup> If many say this dogma is

<sup>1</sup> Comp. § 27.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ritter, *Geschichte der christlichen Philosophie*, 1858, I. p. 327, certainly an unsuspicious witness, says: "In the teaching upon the relation of God to His revelations by the creative word and the Holy Spirit lay the kernel of the distinction between the ancient and the Christian modes of thought."

<sup>3</sup> This is proved by the Formula of Baptism, by the Apostles' Creed, which was at first economically held, and by the ancient Rules of Faith (*Regulæ Fidei*). Comp. Ph. Schaff, *Bibliotheca Symbolica Ecclesiae universalis*, II. 1877, pp 11, etc., 40–62.

the fruit of the tendency to the glorification of Christ, and is contrived for the adornment of His Person, it is sufficient to reply that the Christian Church has not devised or fabricated this doctrine, as the Biblical Doctrine already shows (§ 28), but it has found it in the words of Christ and the Apostles, and in its experience of faith; that it has given expression to the objective foundations of its religious consciousness in that dogma, in unity with the Scriptures and at the suggestion of the apostolic teaching.<sup>1</sup>

This dogma, indeed, was not constructed independently of the apostolic teaching, but was framed at the beginning and until the days of the Apologists for the most part from Scripture under the impulse of Christology and the Baptismal Formula. Starting from the revelation in Christ and the impression which His historical Person made, thought always advanced towards the ultimate bases, until it arrived at the eternal immanent Trinity, the divine Triad. — Christology of itself would only have securely led to a Dyad. Then the Baptismal Formula, which also mentions the Holy Spirit, from which the Baptismal Confession and the Apostles' Creed, as well as the *Regulæ Fidei* were developed, and also the assimilated words of Christ and His apostles, gave a further impulse.—To these factors, which gave an objective impulse, faith also answered on the subjective side, in the immediate being and knowledge of which traces of a threefold divine causality of salvation find expression.<sup>2</sup> For the Christian knows himself united and reconciled in Christ with God as the Father;—by the redeeming power of Christ is conscious of Christ's dignity;—and finally, is aware in himself of a new life in the Holy Ghost and by His agency, in such a way, indeed, that the believer cannot regard that being which God has in him as equal to the being of God in Christ. By the revelation in the Son and Holy Spirit God has become to him a Father. But this Triad revealed in immediate faith was developed at the suggestions afforded by the Baptismal Formula and the apostolic testimony. Let us consider the main phases in the history of the Christian idea of God until the estab-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. *Geschichte der Christologie*, I. pp. 112, etc., 121–129, 883–888.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Frank, *System der Gewissheit*, I. pp. 102, etc.; Thomasius, I. pp. 57, etc.

lishment of the Ecclesiastical Doctrine, and particularly the Doctrine of Attributes in its coherence with the Doctrine of the Trinity.

2. In the second century, in the controversy with Gnosticism, the point uppermost already was the Christian idea of God, particularly the divine Attributes. But even in this connection the close coherence of the correct Doctrine of the divine Attributes with the Doctrine of the Trinity was shown. For, IN THE FIRST PLACE, a *heathen and pantheistic* construction was advocated, partly by the dualistic systems of the *Gnosis*, by which the Absoluteness and Solity of God were violated, partly by the monistic Gnosis of *Basilides* and *Valentin*, in which the Self-identity and Immutability of God were sacrificed *either* to the conception of a development of the divine—as of a seed developing from lower stages to higher, as is seen in the evolutionary System of Basilides,—*or* to an ecstasy of the divine, to an irrepressible divine Communicativeness, and thus to a physical emanation, as this self-privation of the divine is expressed in the sufferings of the Valentinian Achamoth, which indicates a declension of the divine. NEXT, to the heathenizing Gnosis of a dualistic and monistic kind the judaizing Gnosis stood opposed. The latter maintained in a one-sided manner the Self-preservation of God in His immutable Dignity, or the divine Justice as opposed to *Self-communicative Love*. THIRDLY, Marcion *also* opposed the Jewish idea of God, by advocating, in order to present what was purely and exclusively Christian, the Goodness of God as contrasted with His Righteousness, and thus was reluctantly compelled to fall back upon a doctrine of the divine Love which lacked justice, that safeguard of the holiness of love, justice being transferred indeed to a position outside of the good God, and hypostasized in the Demiurge as *deus sœvus*, and then placed in opposition to the good God. Thus the ideas of God of the pre-Christian world were confronted in the Gnostic systems with progressing Christianity. For even Marcion's God indicates, under what is only apparently Christian, a retrogression to Heathenism on account of the unethical surrender of God to the world. How then is the Church related to such a view? Christian faith thinks the loving Self-communication of God in the world to be

completed in Christ. It knows in Christ not merely the communication of a divine power—a prophet, but it knows itself as reconciled to God in Him, and as united in fellowship with God by Christ. But, on the other hand, Christian faith has so slight a tolerance for any levelling of the distinction between God and the world, that it rather deepens that distinction in an ethical manner, since its fundamental presupposition is the separation of man from God by sin. In a word, Christian faith as strongly maintains the holy Exaltation of God above the world, or His just Self-preservation, as His Self-communication in the world,—His Transcendence as well as His Immanence. The union of these opposites is only consciously completed by the Doctrine of the Trinity. The Apologists, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Hippolytus, at first simply express from their experience of Christian faith what the Doctrine of the divine Attributes demanded; they said that as God is not to be thought in a dualistic or polytheistic manner, so He is not to be thought pantheistically, since He is holy Justice; but that He is also not to be thought in a deistic or judaizing manner, but as holy Love.

But by such a reply the *asseveration* only was made, that the divine Attributes are to be so thought of. How the two things were to be united, was not made clear in the least by such a reply, and yet was to be made clear by means of the *Christian* Gnosis. That this must lead of necessity to the trinitarian construction of the idea of God, was to be proved in the conflicts of the third and fourth centuries, in which heresies oppugned the Christian idea of God from the heathen and Jewish side, which, in spite of the seeming Christian character they sought to substantiate, necessarily consistently denied the main Christian fact, namely, the peculiar Being of God in Christ, because they would not allow themselves to be urged onwards to the trinitarian idea of God, and at the same time condemned themselves to an idea of God, defective *either in Justice or Love*. Either in the after-effect of *Jewish* Monotheism, which must be deistic in the one-sidedness of its standpoint of law, the internal communion of God with man, and its perfection as based in the Person of Christ, was denied; or the Self-preservation of God was lost

sight of in the divine Self-communication, and that is the *ethnicing* as well as pantheistic form of the idea of God. Both forms of antagonism were concerned in placing in opposition to Christianity a doctrine of unity, a kind of Monotheism, and they are also at one in repudiating a differentiation of the divine Unity into the Trinity. They are *Monarchians* (afterwards called Unitarians). These two forms of opinion, which are *Jewish* and *heathen* in principle, are the only denials of the Christian, that is, the trinitarian, idea of God possible at any time. Their confutation lies in *proving that they must also violate the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes*, so long as they preclude themselves from the Christian apprehension of God. It is therefore of importance to dogmatic apprehension to consider the history of the Christian Doctrine of God according to its leading features and stadia. On the whole, their development has pursued a regular and logical course. We consider briefly, from the dogmatic point of view, those fundamental opinions of a Monarchian kind which received in their most finished forms in the ancient Church the names of Sabellianism and Arianism (or Subordinationism). They have recurred again and again in ancient and modern times; but their fate is, that the more Sabellianism endeavours to refine itself and to strip off a heathen mutability in God, the more it approaches a deistic conception, *i.e.* its own opposite, and finally passes over thereto; just as, on the other hand, the Jewish or deistic thesis, if it desires to become reconciled with Christian faith, without abandoning its own principle, falls into a merely apparent intercourse of a pagan kind between God and the world, supposed to compensate for the divine communications. Their transition to one another, or their periodicity, is their refutation, and shows at the same time that the features each maintain seek union, but that union is not found in either.<sup>1</sup>

### I.—*Sabellianism.*

Its most ancient form is the so-called Patripassianism. That theory does not mean that the Father in the trinitarian sense is to be regarded as passive. For it has nothing to do with the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the Conclusion of the First Division of this volume, § 27, 7.

Father in the trinitarian sense; but God is said to manifest Himself in Christ, and to become subject to this temporal life and to suffering, of course out of love. The Father is even said to have become the Son (*υἱοπάτωρ*). So taught a section of the Nazarenes, and Praxeas about the year 190.<sup>1</sup> God is supposed to have lived for a time in Christ as man for man's sake, and to have placed Himself in a passive state. How, meanwhile, the divine government went on, is not stated. Noëtus then sought to maintain an impassive God as superior to a passive God, since he supposes passivity and non-passivity to be dependent upon His will. On the one hand, God is said to be immortal; on the other hand, if He will, He may suffer and die. The one God who is in Himself without distinction may, it was thought, assume in the world various modes of existence and forms of manifestation, which may then receive different names. As passionless He may be called Father, and as passive Son. This view forms the transition to *Sabellius* about 220. Not to wholly transform God into one who is mutable and passive, in whom there is, if merely momentarily or partially, a self-detriment consequent on the ecstasy of self-denying love, Sabellius distinguishes the self-contained and distinctionless Monad as the silent Monad from the One who speaks. The speaking or self-revealing Monad he calls the *λόγος*. Inasmuch, then, as he assumes a threefold revelation, he has a threefold Logos. The whole Monad as self-revealing is Logos. It only has the determination in itself now to expand and now contract, a mode of being which, according to the Stoic terminology, is called *πλατυσμός*, *διαστολή*, *ἐκστασις*, and *συστολή*. The expansive movement is transferred into the Logos, which is the generic name for all divine revelation, and which reveals itself as Father in the giving of the Law, as Son in the Incarnation, and as Holy Spirit in the Church, in such a way, indeed, that in all these revelations God is always actual, that one succeeds the other, and that each appears to be transient. So far as God shows Himself in a living manner in the revelation, the living

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schneckenburger, *Das Evangelium der Ägypter*. Accordant views are also to be found in the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, in Ignatius, and in Marcion. On Praxeas, comp. Lipsius' treatise, *Jährb. für deutsche Theol.* IV.



God, or God as the Logos, is, in the opinion of Sabellius, subject to mutability, and in Christ even to suffering. In order to get rid of these remains of pagan passion, change, and metamorphosis, as well as of Arianism, Marcellus<sup>1</sup> of Ancyra refined upon Sabellianism, by saying that he did not allow that the expansion of the Monad was an expansion (πλατυσμός) of Being, as Sabellius supposed, but only an expansion of Will or of efficiency, of the *ἐνέργεια δραστική*. By such a view the Exaltation of God is borne in mind, but His Immanence in the world and His Self-communication to the world are denied, and according to this aspect the Godhead remains always Self-engrossed, and only His power of will acts without Him. With the denial of the Self-communication of God, heathen mutability and passivity are removed, but at the cost of the intimate and vital communion between God and the world, or by approximating to a deistic mode of thought. He is driven to that point of view in the endeavour to maintain with purity the divine Unity, by the presupposition that a unity without distinction is simply the most perfect thing and the highest good. Nevertheless, Marcellus does not arrive at a permanent independence of the world apart from God. On the contrary. The present earthly world, it is true, is supposed to exclude the *Being* of God from itself; in the time to come, in the consummation, the world is reabsorbed into God, so that He is exclusively all in all. Thus he ends in a peculiar vacillation between deistic and pantheistic tendencies, both of which have a common cause in his idea of God.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. on the above, Zahn, *Marcell. v. Ancyra*, 1867, pp. 118, etc.; Schwane, *Dogmengeschichte der patr. Zeit*, Münster 1869, pp. 176–195. If to Marcellus, as to several Apologists who distinguish between λόγος ἰδιόδικτος and *προφορετός*, the λόγος is and remains of course *δυνάμει* in God eternally, still that is not a trinitarian distinction, for the Father is also Himself reason. But the *ἐνέργεια*, also taken as correlate to *δυνάμει*, does not prove the *being* of the Logos in the world, just as little as the spoken word or the thought of the Logos is itself the Logos. The *πλατυσμός* in Marcellus may therefore very well refer to the expansion of His working (*δραστηριὰ ἔσ.*), just as many would replace *omnipræsentia substantialis* by *omnipræsentia operativa*. For the rest, the sagacious work of Zahn has acknowledged that the Trinity of Marcellus is not so very remote from many ecclesiastical teachers (only they are mostly teachers of a century before), and that the indefiniteness of his mode of speech leaves plenty of room for controversy upon the meaning in which his words are to be taken. Nor can I regard Eusebius as so untrustworthy as Zahn does.

So far, then, as Christian faith speaks, notwithstanding, of different divine revelations, whilst the absolutely simple Essence of God, according to the Sabellian mode of thought, cannot form the basis of this diversity of revelations contained in that Essence, the only thing left it to say in reference to the relation of God to the world is, that the reason why the revelations of the absolutely simple God appear to us to be diverse, lies in the constitution of the world. Thus God is Himself the undivided lustre, the simple communicative light which shines eternally the same, but His rays are diversely refracted by the world according to the diversity of its receptivity. In this statement it certainly remains unexplained how the world comes to cause the divine Essence, which always remains in itself simple, and on its side equally related to everything, to appear in such diverse fashion. The reason thereof, as of the constitution of the world generally, unless we would pass over to a dualistic independence of the world as regards God after the manner of the doctrine of an eternal Matter, must lie in God, who has framed and willed the idea of the world according to its differentiation, and has placed that reason in Christ, in whom He may have a unique immanence in the world. But in that way we are again referred for revelation to a causality in God, which is not everywhere self-identical, but different. In the one God there are thus different sources of salvation to be assumed, which must likewise form a coherent unity. The economical Trinity, which Sabellianism is willing to acknowledge, leads back to distinctions immanent in God Himself, the more certainly that the world of revelation is not merely concerned with an inculcation of truths, but with the true *Being* of God in the world, with the deeds of God, indeed with His Self-communication. If, therefore, Sabellianism will not pursue this bent towards the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, if it will not find the basis of the various divine Self-communications to the world in different divine Principles, in harmony with which the constitution of the world has been ordained by God, if it will rather find the basis of the diverse manifestations of the divine revelations in a diverse constitution of the world which reflects back to God, without passing from that constitution to God Himself, then the world must

exist for God according to a necessity independent of His Will, instead of being made by Him, by which means God is so conditioned by the world that His Absoluteness cannot remain. And that is a false independence of the world, already lying along the line of Deism. If God can only beam upon the world, but cannot have His Life therein without self-detriment, the world, so far as realization and life are still ascribed to it, is to be thought as independent of the Will of God, and living, so to speak, of its own right. Should Sabellianism, on the other hand, set seriously to work, that God may have a Being in His revelation when in progress—and that a diverse Being, may place Himself within that revelation, and, so to speak, pass over into it, a defection in God will have to be supposed, and the transition will become a divine declension and self-detriment in the world, unless the point is reached of associating His immutable Self-preservation with His Self-communicativeness, a union which the Church attains by its Doctrine of God.

## II.—*Arianism.*

To the family of Arianism there also essentially belongs, it is true, the Ebionitic Christology in its various forms (the prophetic, angelologic), which is concerned with the leading non-communicative idea of God and the accentuation of the divine Self-preservation at the cost of Self-communication. But still Arianism was the first under the semblance of Christianity to coherently push this standpoint to its issues. Sabellianism for its part thinks of God as mere *Substance*, and, unless it becomes dualistic, is unable to vindicate a true and secure reality for the world, because it cannot show the basis of the world to lie in God. It can only speak of accidental divine movements, which form or produce a phenomenal world. Arianism, on the contrary, thinks of God as *Causality*, and in itself that is a higher category. The world is not semblance in its esteem, but firm realization, and is indeed even self-dependent as opposed to God. But it is compelled to acknowledge that the world is not absolute, and thus it so far recurs to God, to have in the idea of God the cause for the world as a realization which has become self-dependent.

The supreme God is nothing else to it than the supreme *Causality of the world*, the point in which the chain of mundane causes is supposed to end in an absolutely simple and uncaused Being. God is not, therefore, to Arianism the cause of Himself, not "Father and Son in Himself;" He is only the Uncaused (*ἀγεννησία*), who caused the world. This negative expresses, according to Arius, the Essence of God, which is therefore necessarily non-communicative, and indeed cannot communicate Himself. The world, together with the "Son," accepted from Christianity, is *ἐτεροούσιον*. Actual living relation between God and the world, that initial but unexplained Causality excepted, is excluded; when once it exists, the world puts itself in motion self-dependently, by its own agency, so to speak. The end of man is not true communion with God, he only stands in need of teaching and right action. By mere knowledge and volition on the human side, a relation is established by the Law between God and man originating in God. Therefore the world has, in the view of Arius, been created by God, in the first instance in the form of the Son, as such a unity out of which everything else can and shall evolve itself. Plato taught that mature gods must precede the formation of the world, as mediators between the imperfection of material things and the eternal and incommunicable unity of the supreme Idea.<sup>1</sup> The living Beginning of the world in whom the world is supposed to be a unity, is similarly thought of by Arius, as a kind of divine intermediary for the formation of the world. He is called by Arius in the Christian phraseology the Son, but He is only a creature in his view; and although Arius secures to Him a unique mediating position between God and the world by the fact that He represents their unity, still He has not always been (*ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν*), He is changeable (*τρέπτός*) and mutable. But just because He is Himself temporal and mutable, He can enter into an unchangeable operation for the formation and government of the world, whilst the immutable God cannot be concerned in the formation and management of mutable individual things. Thus the sole relation between God Himself and the world, that in the Son, passes immediately into a deistic and irreconcilable opposition between God and the world,

<sup>1</sup> Ritter, I. p. 333.

consequent upon the fact that the Son, the First-born of creation, has been relegated by God to a self-dependent existence. God has only become the cause of the world by creating the Son, by whose agency the world becomes. But in this world, in which the Son is reckoned, His knowledge and working also being temporal, all life and all motion exclusively fall. It has a self-dependent being, like God and side by side with God; its dignity and divine likeness are found in the fact that it is a smaller God, a copy which repeats Him, so to speak, but that it is not a magnitude to be animated by God, and standing in a position of living communion with Him. This deistic world is neither receptive of God nor desirous of being so, when it is abstracted from its first basis of existence. This self-dependence of the world shows us how the Jewish principle of the separation of the empirical world from God passes into the deification of the world, *i.e.* into the heathen principle. But as the absolute separation of God from the world passes for dignifying Him, so the separation of the world from God passes for an increase of its self-dependence and greatness.—The conflict with Arianism became so violent and perilous, just because its idea of God was not simply Judaistic, but presented a medley of heathen and Jewish elements. Instead of that higher unity which united in itself what was true of the pre-Christian religions, it supposed an apparent unity which combined what was false in Heathenism and Judaism, and excluded what was true. For what was true in Heathenism was the intimate union which it sought between the divine and human; and what was true in Judaism was the jealousy with which the idea of God was to be guarded against contamination by the finite. Excluding the true elements in each, Arianism adopted what was false in each;—from Heathenism, the commingling of the divine and human, for the creature, with which the Son is also to be reckoned, receives a self-dependence whereby it becomes a second God, and the Son, a creature, is made the creator of the world and the object of divine adoration; whilst from unbelieving Judaism the abstract separation of God from the world is taken, the deistic and Pelagian element, and a quite contingent origin is left to the world, the relation between God and the world thus resting upon an arbitrary basis. But

at this point the turning-point had been reached, at which the true and higher unity was to be opposed to the false reciprocity of the pre-Christian religions. Athanasius became the instrument of advance, of the pure and Christian concept of God.

*Observation.*—The Arian mode of thought has turned up in later times in manifold forms. But the more it has rejected the heathen principle, the more unrestrainedly the deistic principle has entered, which denies the revelation of God as it denies His living connection with the world generally. So has it been with *Deism* proper, and the older *Rationalism*. But Arianism, like Deism in general, is an internal contradiction. God is supposed to be merely the unmoved and immutably self-identical Unity (*ἀγνόητα*), the highest Essence (*Être suprême*), but the world (and the Son) cannot have always been; thus God *became* Causality, He was not always such; and after He had produced the world, He worked no longer. Therefore, in the rigid idea of God held by Deism, there is necessarily Change and Temporality. If God is a lifeless and incommunicable Essence, how is He to be supposed to have the power of being the cause of the world *once* even? But if, nevertheless, the world has come into being through God, not without His volition and knowledge, how is that rigid idea of God to be maintained? The more, then, the idea of God pales before this self-dependent world, and the sentiment of the need for God dies out, the more necessary is it that the world be taken for the Universe, for the true Being; and thus Deism passes over, as happened in recent times, into the deification of the world, into Pantheism of the pancosmistic form.

3. The vanquishing of the pantheistic and deistic principles was effected by the Teachers of the Church, by their giving prominence to the previous treasures of immediate faith, and by their formulating a doctrine of an immanent Trinity. Athanasius starts, as from a firm basis, from the fact that God is a living God, and desires to reveal Himself in His whole Majesty, and that we stand in need of Him, and are receptive of that Majesty. According to Athanasius, reason longs for the original Reason, for communion with God and knowledge of His Essence. We are associated with the rational by reason; we are able to have an immediate communion with God, if God is willing to have that communion with us. The

act of communion of God in Christ and in the Holy Spirit shows us this will. In Christ and in the Holy Spirit is contained the full revelation of the truth, the full Self-communication of God. But that is only possible because the creative Word who has become incarnate in Christ is equal with God, and is as perfect as the Father (*ὁμοούσιος*). Otherwise the perfect truth would not be revealed, because the Revealer would not comprise the whole truth. Besides, the Holy Spirit could not deify us unless He were God; that is the soteriological necessity of the *ὁμοούσιον*. For we are not to be united merely with a creature or a finite being, but we are to be immediately united with the living God. But there is also superadded a metaphysical necessity to transcend Monarchianism. Athanasius and the great ecclesiastical teachers of the fourth century have rightly acknowledged that God must before all things be in Himself living, if a world is to be able to issue from Him. The concept of God, according to which He is a Being self-enclosed in His own Sublimity and without distinctions, is a false one in their esteem. They see in God Himself eternal Life and eternal Motion. But internal distinctions are associated with that view. Athanasius sees that without such distinctions God could not have Aseity for a moment. "The divine well is never dry, the divine light never lacks lustre." God is not *ἄγονος*, unfruitful and without productiveness in Himself, otherwise He must also be *ἀνεπὲρρητος*, and could create nothing. Because He is in Himself eternally productive Life, He is also creative without Himself. What has He eternally produced? Himself first. There is in God eternal Self-origination, He is at the same time *αἴτιον* and *αἰτιατόν*; but because He is eternally in Himself this vital movement and these vital potentialities, it is possible for Him to bring forth a world,—an impossibility for rigid Being. This divine Self-origination, in which He is *αἴτιον* and *αἰτιατόν*, Athanasius applies in behalf of the trinitarian distinctions. The *αἴτιον* in the Godhead the Church calls Father, the *αἰτιατόν* therein it calls Son, and both alike are in the atmosphere of the divine Essence.

According to Gregory Nazianzen also, God is not a mere Unit. In its seclusion a Unit would be contrary to itself; it must struggle out from itself and descend from itself,

in order to become life and motion. Nor is there in Him a physical overflow, which God cannot restrain, but "without the division which is given with finite multiplicity as well as without unordered plurality, the Monad moves Himself from the beginning into the Dyad, until He comes to rest in the Triad."<sup>1</sup> Thus the abstract motionless Simplicity of the divine Essence is broken for these Teachers by the Christian knowledge of God. The Godhead has His Self-consciousness, according to Athanasius and Hilary—that is to say, is master of Himself, because God, the Generator or Father (*αἵτιον*), beholds Himself in the *αἵτιατόν*, His Image, and delights therein.<sup>2</sup> Thus, also, the distinct factors in God are concerned, according to Athanasius, in the divine Self-knowledge. Thus, because God possesses Himself before all things by the distinction in Himself (and thus neither the Arian nor the deistic fear has any ground that God may, in communicating Himself to the world, violate His Transcendence and commingle Himself with the world by living communion therewith), Self-communication is the rather possible; nor is the Sabellian opinion, which objects to commingling, justified by the divine Self-communication; for there can be no Self-communication, which has not the divine Self-preservation for its constant presupposition.

*Observation.*—No scientific doctrine of the Trinity, it is true, was proved or framed during the conflicts of the third and fourth centuries, but the authorization of—nay, the necessity of the tendency towards—differences in God, inherent in Christian faith, was shown. Further, the conflicts principally raged, it is true, around the *Homoousia of the Son*, and thus around the question whether the divine Monad must necessarily be thought as advancing to the Dyad. But if this was affirmed in order to think of God as living, then the *third moment*, witnessed by Scripture and faith, causes no essential difficulty, because an endless advance to wider and wider differences does not consist either with the interests of faith, nor even of thought. On the contrary, since the unity of God cannot be annihilated by the duality,

<sup>1</sup> Gregor. Naz. *Orať.* 29, 2, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Hilarius, *De Trinitate*, ii. 3; *Comment. on Matt.* xi. 27; *Tractatus in Ps.* xci. 6; Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, i. 20: αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς γινώσκῃς ἑαυτὸν (αἰνῶν) ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἰδῶν ἀπορχαίμῃ αὐτόν.



thought requires a third, the contribution of which is the reducing duality to unity. This appeared in the controversy concerning the *Holy Spirit*, whom the Arian Macedonius wished to place by the side of the Logos as a created being of a higher kind, which would have involved a heathen Polytheism. The reply of the teachers of the Church was, that the Holy Spirit is the principle of Communion, He does not separate the undivided and permanent divine Essence, but He unites the two first, which, unless they had their common relation to the third, must stand apart and annul the *μοναρχία* of God. Therefore the Council of 381 mentions the Holy Spirit also.

If distinctions in God, the necessity for which is established in the conflicts of the early centuries, are nevertheless denied, and God, as Monad and as highest Excellence, is therefore thought of as a mere unity which excludes distinctions in God, the consequence is either that this unity, if it is thought of as communicative, loses itself in the world, is transmuted into the world by a diminution in itself, and the logical issue of such a Sabellianism is Pantheism; or the divine Essence remains without change the abstract, simple Monad, as in Deism,—but in that case there is no communication of the Monad, and neither Goodness nor Life is possible in God Himself.

The Christian Church, on the contrary, affirms both things: that God eternally preserves Himself in Himself, and that He communicates Himself, that He is just and that He is absolutely good, that He is only the one in combination with the other. And it has the authorization of both in the fact that distinctions are to be supposed in God Himself, by means of which He preserves Himself even in Self-communication, and is able to be loving even in Self-preservation.

4. It might be thought that in the trinitarian controversies no such comprehensive questions upon the relation of God to the world, and upon the idea of God which maintains that relation, have been mooted, but that only one single point, the historical manifestation of Christ and its correct conception, formed the material of the deliberations, or that the Christologic question merely stood in a contingent and, so to speak, proximate relation to these far-reaching problems upon the Transcendence and Immanence of God. But it is not so. It was shown in those conflicts how the pre-Christian age wavered incessantly between the divine Immanence and Transcendence, how insufficient the pre-Christian Monotheism was, and how only a new and higher idea of God proved itself competent to

the harmonizing of both elements which are equally indispensable to the religious need. And this new idea is given to faith embryonically in Christ, who, coming from God and leading to God, on the one hand confirms the distinction between God and the world; whilst, on the other hand, the Immanence of God in the world is given in Him as a matter of fact in absolute form. The importance of this individual person, Christ, faith knew at once as a fact of universal bearing. In Christ one had to do with a concern of the universe, with the central relation of God to the world generally, and nothing is more common in the ancient Church than the efflorescence of this universal significance of Christ. Heaven and earth are united in Him; in Him the separation between God and the world is exalted into a unity without confusion; in His birth ancient Christendom already sees a new world brought into being, a humanity which only comes to its own true life because it bears within itself the divine Life and Spirit. Further, Christendom knows in Christ not merely a transitory divine act, which has nothing to do with the internal divine Essence, but the highest and the permanent divine Self-revelation, an act which, because it is Self-communication, becomes the divine Being in the world which could have received this Being in no other way, although individuals in history glance, so to speak, into the heart of God, and see as originated in the Essence of God Him who, whilst no one has seen God, has revealed Him by His existence, because He is in His bosom, John i. 18.

§ 29b.—*The Ecclesiastical Doctrine.*

SOURCES:—The Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, following the precedent of the Apostles' Creed; C. A. 1; Art. Sm. 303; Cat. Mj. 489; F. C. 626, 824, 828; Cat. Palat. Q. 25; Helv. i. c. 3, ii. 6; Gal. vi.; Angl. i.; Scot. i.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [*I.e.* *Augsburg Confession*, 1; *Articles of Smalkald*, 303; the *Catechismus Major*, 489; *Formula of Concord*, 626, 824, 828; *Heidelberg Catechism*, i. cap. 3, ii. 6 (see p. 92, note); the Sixth Article of the *Gallican Confession*, accepted by a Synod in Paris 1559; the first of the English *Articles*; and the first of *Knox's Confession*.—Tn.]

The Apostles' Creed is the germ ; the Nicene accentuates the distinction of the Hypostases ; the Athanasian at the same time reduces the distinctions to unity. The three great Christian Confessions are at one in the recognition of an immanent and no mere economical doctrine of the Trinity.

1. The One divine Essence is inadequately, and indeed falsely thought, unless it is acknowledged to be triune or triple ; such is the tenor of the common teaching of Christendom. The Three—Father, Son, and Spirit—are the One true God. This is negatively stated by the repudiation of abstract Monotheism,—*damnant Mahometistas, Conf. Aug. 1, Conf. Helv. 3*,—as well as of the ancient and modern Antitrinitarians (*Form. Conc. 626*), amongst whom Sabellians and Pantheists are also included, who say that the *verbum* is merely *vocale*, and the Holy Spirit a *motus in rebus creatis*. *Tres personæ* are to be the rather taught. What, then, is the meaning of "Person" according to the actual sense of the ecclesiastical Confessions ? The question is not superfluous, seeing that the expressions *πρόσωπον*, *persona*, *ὑπόστασις*, have not always had at all the same meaning, and are even in themselves ambiguous.<sup>1</sup> Whilst, according to present usage, the idea of Person is essentially constituted by the quality of being an Ego

<sup>1</sup> In the more ancient days, previous to the fourth century, *πρόσωπον*, originally a "role," was used especially by the Sabellians as a designation for a transient form of manifestation or revelation, which had a merely accidental relation to the Substance (*ὑπόστασις*). In order, then, to give decided expression to that in the divine distinctions which was permanent in itself, the statement was made, in opposition to Sabellianism, that those distinctions were Substance (*ὑπόστασις*), and not merely forms of manifestation ; *ὑπόστασις* was not in that case as yet precisely distinguished from *οὐσία* (*essentia* or essence). But since the distinctions were threefold, whilst there could be no desire to assert that there were three divine Substances or Essences (*οὐσίαι*), the word *οὐσία* (*essentia*) came into use for the One divine Essence ; and to designate the Essence according to its three eternal forms of being, a new *terminus* had to be sought, or a new meaning given to one of the old terms. The latter course was followed, although not without a lingering sense of inadequacy. The distinctions were now called *ὑποστάσεις* and *πρόσωπα*, by the Latins *personæ* ; the latter word no longer in the Sabellian sense of *role*, of forms of historical manifestation, but of eternal internal forms of being of the One Godhead, and *ὑποστάσις* in the sense of the manifold modes of being of the divine Substance (also called *modi subsistendi* of that Substance). Each of the Hypostases is called an *ἰδίον* (*proprium*) in the divine *οὐσία*, which is the same in all as *καθ' ἑαυτήν*, and not merely *κατ' ἑαυτήν* or

(*Ichheit*, Egoity), in the critical time of the formation of the dogma the Hypostases or *personæ* in the divine Being were to the leading Fathers modes of being, not merely modes of revelation, of the One Godhead, who is thought of neither impersonally nor as a mere generic idea, but as self-conscious Personality (Egoity) in them and by their means.<sup>1</sup> As far as the Augsburg Confession is concerned, it holds to the result and terminology of the ancient Greek Church. It defines *Persona* thus: it is *non pars aut qualitas in alio, sed quod proprie subsistit*. This signifies (1) that by the trinitarian distinctions a mere property in another is *not* to be thought; the Son, for example, is not a mere attribute of the Father. The trinitarian distinction is more profound than that of reciprocal properties, even if the latter are objectively thought. Rather is the divine Essence (*οὐσία, essentia*)—therefore the totality of the divine attributes—in each of the trinitarian *personæ*; they are to be ascribed, according to the Athanasian Creed, to each one of the "Persons." As little, therefore, may *persona* be understood to mean a *part* merely of another and larger whole, whether that greater whole be represented as one of the three Persons or as the divine Essence; for example, Son and Spirit are not mere constituents of the Father, that would lead to a false subordination. The Deity is not divisible. The mere quantitative definition, according to which each distinction would be a

*ipsius* (comp. Schwane, *Dogmengeschichte*, pp. 209, etc.). The definition of the Damascene brings this to a more precise and clear expression: "The Hypostasis is a *εἰρὸς ἰνδιπίπτος*, a separate mode of being (*modus subsistendi*) of the One Godhead." But God as a Unity is not a separate mode of being of the Godhead, and therefore is not *persona* in this sense. And since God as a Unity is always presupposed by the Church of all times to be a Personality, and is not regarded in an impersonal manner, it is hence especially clear that the word *persona* in the Hypostases is not meant in the same sense as the Personality (Egoity) of God in our modern phraseology. In relation to the Hypostases there is no mention of Person in this modern sense in the Fathers who formulated the Doctrine of the Trinity, but the reference was to separate modes of being of the One God personally thought of in the Three. Comp. my *Geschichte der Christol.* I. 909, 938 (Eng. transl. II. pp. 909, 922).

<sup>1</sup> *Persona* as applied to the distinctions in God is frequently recognised, nevertheless, as an inadequate expression. The poverty of human speech is said to afford no expression which exactly coincides, the expression can only suggest. Comp. Augustin, *De Trin.* v. 9: *Dictum est tamen tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur sed ne taceretur*, vii. 4. Similarly Anselm, *Monolog.* cc. xxxvii. etc., lxviii. Also compare Ueberweg, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, 3d edit. II. 128.

*quantum*, is as inadequate as the attributive. For, if the whole were thought as a *fourth* magnitude, outside of the Three who are contained and real, and really embracing them (Tetradism), the divine Unity, which is the divine Essence withal, would be opposed to the Three, whereby true Deity would be taken from them, and they would be debased to mere constituents or qualities of a fourth and different Being. On the contrary, were the Whole simply thought of as the *genus* or the *sum* of the Three, that would lead to Tritheism. The Deity is not to be thought of as a genus, which embraces different individuals, just as mankind embraces many men. That view Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and others, for example,<sup>1</sup> opposed very consciously and very definitely. If the divine Essence were distributed, if the Unity were divided into Three, we should have three separate Individuals, Tritheism. Instead of this, the Athanasian Creed says: *Non tres Dii, sed unus est Deus*. The *tres personæ* rather constitute the idea of the One true and self-dependent God, because Unity is not something separate from Them, but immanent in Them. And this Unity the Fathers of the Church undoubtedly regard, as has been said, as self-conscious and personal, and not as a *neutrum* so to speak. (2) But what *positively* is the true meaning of the formula, *tres personæ*? The Augsburg Confession says, relying in this upon the scientific usage, as that had been long naturalized by the Cappadocian Fathers and John of Damascus, and in the West by Boëthius: *Persona est quod proprie subsistit*, that is, that which is a peculiar mode of being in the one Godhead. To *proprie* answers the ἰδικῶς (*eigenthümlich*, proper) ὑπάρχον, ὑφιστάμενον of the Fathers; in opposition to temporality or transitoriness in these distinctions, *subsistere* is supposed to secure their stability (σταδύς) in God.<sup>2</sup> There is, of course, amongst those who would harmonize unity and

<sup>1</sup> Connected therewith is the fact that in the Middle Ages, as for example by Innocent III., the application of *nomina propria* to the three Hypostases is thought a delicate matter, and by the Lombard (lib. i. dist. 24), after the precedent of Gregory of Nyssa, the application of number—that is, they are not to be numbered as three divine subjects. With respect to number, God is One it is said, to wit, God is not thought of in that way as a genus, but the Hypostases are thought as individuals of a genus, since no Hypostasis can be thought of without the others.

<sup>2</sup> Basil already used for that purpose the expression τρώεις ὑπάρξεις, that is, of

distinctions in God, a different conception even to the present time of the *τρόπος ὑπάρξεως* or of the different *modi* of *proprie subsistendi*, inasmuch as some put the unity in the background in their attention to the distinctions, and others act conversely. The doctrine of the Church leaves an amplitude here, just as the Fathers who formulated the ecclesiastical dogma are by no means identical in their teaching; only that doctrine, according to the Athanasian Creed, teaches that the *tres aeterni, immensi, omnipotentes*, etc., do not contradict the divine Unity, and, on the other hand, teaches that immanent distinctions in the divine Essence are not to be denied. An approximation to the satisfactory union of these opposites was possibly to be first expected from the method already opened by Hilary and Athanasius. If, namely, the divine Unity is thought of as personal in the sense of Self-consciousness and Self-determination, and if the Hypostases, instead of being dissolved in that Unity in a Sabellian manner, are rather thought of as the eternal points of mediation of the absolute divine Personality, who is in them, then a satisfactory union of the opposites such as is required seems to be possible.<sup>1</sup> According to such a view, the doctrine of the Church does not maintain merely generated or mutable modes of being in

the One Godhead, and that became (through Johannes Dam. *De fide orthod.* i. capp. 2, 10–13, cap. 8) the standing formula for the immanent relation of the distinctions in God, whilst the formula for the economic Trinity is, that “God has a threefold *τρόπος ἀποκαλύψεως*.” This designation of the distinctions as a threefold method of the being of God also corresponds with the name of the Holy Triplicity (*Dreifaltigkeit*). John Damascene further says that the Hypostases are distinguished from each other *σχίσαι*; i.e. they denote different “*Relations*” of God to Himself. That expression, again, is borrowed from the Cappadocian Fathers. Gregory of Nyssa, as well as Gregory Nazianzen, has this formula: They are distinguished *ἐν πρὸς ἀλλήλους σχίσαι*. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, book v., has especially elaborated this thought, that the *personae* are not distinguished *substantialiter*, but *secundum relationem*. Thomas Aquinas expressly attached himself in this point to Augustine. Comp. Schwane, pp. 207, 232, 233. So among the Lutheran theologians especially did John Gerhard.

<sup>1</sup> Athanasius repudiates *ἐνὶ ὑποστάσει μεμιγμένους καὶ αὐτὰς, ἐνὶ ἐσχέσει* (*Contra Arium*, iii. 5). Unity and Triality are to be thought in and with each other, so that, when the Father is thought, the Son and also the Spirit will be thought with Him. *Ad Serapion.* i. 4. Although they are also called *εἶδωσι* so far as all divine attributes belong to them, still, according to Athanasius, God is only vitally self-originating and self-conscious by means of the Holy Triad. The three names are to be thought together, in order to think the One true God. *Id.* cap. 23.

God, no mere diverse forms of revelation, as Sabellianism or "Modalism"<sup>1</sup> teaches, and as little maintains Tritheism, which does not consist with the One absolute Personality of God. On the other hand, historical inquiry upholds Nitzsch when he says that "ecclesiastical theology (for example, of an Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, John of Damascus, Anselm, Thomas, J. Gerhard) has neglected nothing in order to oppose the idea of a Person to that of kind of subsistence and relation of God to Himself." Each of the Hypostases is, it is true, a point of unity for the *ιδιότητες*, which belong to their mode of being (*συνδρομαὶ ιδιοτήτων*); but also they are not three severed Subjects with separate Self-consciousness and divided Self-determination, but, as the general course of the doctrine of the Church in the time of its productivity must be said to indicate, they are to be regarded as intermediate between attributes and Egoity or Personality; whilst, on the other hand, the whole divine Essence lies in them, *i.e.* the One absolute Personality, although in different wise.

2. If, then, we bestow further consideration upon the ecclesiastical doctrine of the *relations of the Three Persons to one another and to the divine Unity*, the distinction of the Three Persons of the divine Triad from one another is circumscribed by the fact that the Father is not merely *non factus*, *non creatus*, both of which predicates may also be affirmed of the Son and Spirit, but that He is also *non genitus*, as the Son is, and *non spiratus*, *procedens*, as is the Holy Spirit. The Father *gignit filium*, *spirat spiritum sanctum*. According to the Western teaching, the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son; according to the Eastern, from the Father alone, who is called *πῦρ καὶ πηγὴ πάσης θεότητος*. The Western *filiogue* more completely applies the trinitarian thought, but not without giving rise to the impression that a mere subordinate position belongs to the Holy Spirit, in so far as He merely proceeds from the Father and the Son, is originated by Them without reciprocity. On the other hand, the *filiogue*

<sup>1</sup> It is clear from the above that it is incorrect to call this doctrine of the Trinity modalistic, which accepts in God Himself, and not merely in His revelation in the world, various modes of being, or *modos subsistendi*. In this sense the doctrine of the Church itself, together with its doctrine of the threefold *εἰσόδος* *ἐκείνης*, is modalistic.

checks the identification of the Father with the Monad or Original Substance, to which the Greek mode of doctrine inclines. For in the Son the Father has an equal placed over against Him, since the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. If the subordination of the Spirit is to be excluded by the further synthesis of the dogma, He must be again so referred to the Father, that without the Holy Spirit as a co-determining principle the trinitarian process in God cannot come to a conclusion, nay, cannot exist. But little as the distinctions are to be confounded, they nevertheless have an internal relation to one another, indeed they may be themselves called different *relationes* to one another and to the divine Essence. This leads us to the *relation of the tres personæ to the divine Unity*, which is not to be disturbed by them. Tritheism is repudiated in the most definite terms.<sup>1</sup> The Athanasian Creed says, that the One divine Essence is not divided by the *Persons* (*neque substantiam separantes*). But that separation would take place if the Three had indeed the same Substance, but divided into Persons like three separate individuals. In that case, as regards the Unity, there would only remain a moral or a generic unity (Tritheism). One and the same Godhead would be in them (§ 6). By the statement that they have *coæterna majestas*, the evolution of the Trinity is precluded.

The *Formula Concordiæ* says, in opposition to Tritheism,<sup>2</sup> that the opinion is to be repudiated, in which each *Persona* has its *distincta et ab aliis separata essentia*, although these *tres distinctæ separatæ essentiæ* may be allowably thought to be like one another, or *ut alii tres distincti et in essentiis suis separati homines* as unlike.

*Observation.*—When the Doctrine of the Trinity is regarded rather as traditionally imparted merely than as a result of thought, the tendency, it is true, always returns, to resolve it into a thrice repeated positing (*Gesetztsein*) of one absolute Personality, although the Teachers of the Church have ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Athanasium*, §§ 3, 11, 12, 18, 23. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, v. 8-10, says that there is only One Omniscience in God, as Athanasius teaches: "*Unus æternus, immensus, omnipotens, unus Dominus, unus Deus*," §§ 11, 14, 16, 18.

<sup>2</sup> 626, 29; 829, 37.



pressly repudiated that interpretation, *i.e.* to resolve it into three absolute Personalities,—the word being understood according to the present lexicographic usage,—each of whom must have His own separate consciousness, His separate Self-determination, etc., and might even be thought, apart from the others, as a complete whole of Himself. But Tritheism is repudiated. Thus Johannes Philoponus, about the year 560, who, like his teacher Johannes Ascunages, saw, as an Aristotelian, distinct Essences (*μυρίαις οὐσίαις*) in the Hypostases. Since a nature or genus, according to Aristotle, exists in no other fashion than in individuals (*μυρίωις*), so, thought Philoponus, there could be no talk of the One divine Essence different from the real Individuals thought of under that name. Since, therefore, he said, the Church speaks of Three characteristic Hypostases as real, it is manifest that the Deity must consist of these Three; accordingly, there are three *ἰδίαι θεότητες*, three distinct Godheads, three *φύσεις* to be taught, but not at the same time One really existent Godhead. This Godhead is, in his esteem, the universal *idea* merely, under which the three *θεότητες* are comprised. He was opposed by another Monophysite, the Patriarch Damian, who propounded that the Unity is also real. But since he also applied the idea of genus to God and the Triad, only conceiving genus realistically, his so-called *Tetradism* was in fact a degradation of the Hypostases to mere accidents in the Godhead as a generic Essence. When the tendency to think of God as a generic Essence became evident to the Church by means of these two opposite statements,—namely, towards Tritheism if the genus were Nominalistically regarded, and towards Tetradism if the Realist conception ruled,—the category of Genus as one pertaining to natural life was repudiated as inapplicable to the Trinity, in harmony with the teachers of the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries (see p. 381).

3. To the doctrine of the Church already stated, *ecclesiastical Dogmatics* has also added a logical, though little fruitful, analysis, by which the *æqualitas* (*ὁμοουσία, consubstantialitas*), the *distinctio* or the *character hypostaticus*, and the *immanentia* of the *tres personæ* in one another, are brought before the eye. On this point we only make the following remarks in this place:—

(a) It follows from the *Æqualitas* that each of the Persons not merely has an *ὁμοιότης*, but a *ταυτότης* of the divine Essence, and therefore has all the attributes, without which

the divine *Essence* cannot be thought, still—as Calov adds—each in His own way.

(b) The *character hypostaticus* is the complex of the different characteristics (*notæ*) of each Person. The *notæ* are *internæ* (*opera ad intra*, as *generare*, *spirare*, *procedere*) and *externæ* (*opera ad extra*). The former concern the *τρόπος υπάρξεως*, the latter the *τρόπος ἀποκαλύψεως*, or the economic Trinity. In reference to the *notæ internæ*, the ancient Dogmatic Theologians were able to add nothing essential to the definitions previously given (p. 383), except that, in relation to the *generari* of the Son and the *spirari* of the Holy Spirit, they observe of both that there is no passivity in God, and both are to be regarded as *actus*. *Generare*, some say, takes place *per modum intellectus*, *spirare* by the Will. There is, they assert, a difference of logical order in the Three,—the Father as the Principle of the Son having the first place, and the Holy Spirit the third,—whilst subordination of the Son or Spirit is repudiated, and commonly, therefore, the derivation from the Will. As far as the *notæ externæ* are concerned (the *opera ad extra*), Creation is ascribed to the Father and the Sending of the Son, Redemption is ascribed to the Son, Sanctification and Inspiration to the Holy Spirit; nevertheless, the canon asserts "*opera ad extra sunt communia, indivisa*," in such a way, namely, that the *tres personæ* are concerned in everything, but in different ways. Each of the divine activities is said to pass through each of the three *personæ*, according to their manner and order.<sup>1</sup>

(c) The most important addition made by the Dogmatic Theologians to the Symbols, is their doctrine of the *Immanentia*,

<sup>1</sup> Thomasius deviates essentially from the Ecclesiastical Doctrine, inasmuch as he represents the Father as ready to act, so to speak, of Himself, without Son and Spirit (I. p. 106, II. pp. 293, etc.); the distinguishing characteristic of the Father lies, he thinks, in the fact that, being Himself eternally unconditioned, He wills and knows Himself as the basis of Himself, and is absolutely content in His Fulness; the Son consists, he says, through and for the Father, in dependence upon Him. In that case the Son would have a mere contingent existence,—the Father is alone properly God, and God apart from the Son and Spirit is already thought of as *εἷς* in Himself. (Thomasius, moreover, speaks notwithstanding of an Original Will, an Original Personality, who separates Himself into Three Persons.) The Father would alone, in that view, have Aseity. But, according to Athanasius, the Father cannot be truly thought without at the same time thinking of the Son and Spirit also. It is therefore

or the living reciprocal interpenetration of the three Hypostases (*περιχώρησις*, *Circumcessio*), following the precedent of John of Damascus, whereby the distinction of the Hypostases is established, but also reduced to unity. This *περιχώρησις*, the trinitarian parallel to the Christological *περιχώρησις*, is opposed to Tritheism and Tetradism because of its conception of a movement, an eternal process in God. Therefore the expression *περιχώρησις*, *circumcessio*, is more characteristic than *immanentia*, *inexistentia*. But the thought of the living process and circular movement (*circumcessio*)<sup>1</sup> must be so developed that the three Hypostases—not to be regarded as a threefold repetition of the Godhead, which would be something perfectly empty as well as idle—are not merely united through the Unity of the Essence, for that also supposes Tritheism, but that the Hypostases as such, *i.e.* as different, are associated of themselves with each other, but are all so articulated that each turns and tends of Himself to the others. In this way that which is distinctive in God has attained to combination, and the circular movement of the divine Life is closed in eternal perfection, inasmuch as God eternally moves by means of the three Hypostases as His points of mediation. These Hypostases are the correlated and requisite Principles of the eternal process. That process conditions each of the Hypostases in its difference from the others, as, for example, the Son makes the Father the Father, and not conversely merely. So the Three are real relations of the One God to and in Himself, which are related to one another, which cannot exist without one another, and which are therefore given with one another, *i.e.* they are three *Correlates*, no

quite correct when Voigt says (pp. 69, 70), that the Doctrine of Thomasius has a strong tri-theistic colouring, inclining, as ever, to Subordination. It also agrees with that opinion, that Thomasius, without detracting from the identity of Essence, commends the derivation of the Son from the *Will* of the Father. It is a very different opinion when it is said that the trinitarian God eternally reproduces Himself by His Will, in which the Three Principles are equally concerned. For a more precise examination, see note under § 32, 3. Kahnis, III. pp. 226, etc., subscribes yet more decisively to a Subordinationism; only the Father, he says, is God in the original sense of the word, Son and Spirit are only so in a derivative sense. Von Hofmann only gets to pre-temporal Positings of the Divine Ego for the purpose of a threefold revelation in the world.

<sup>1</sup> Even Augustine says (*De Trinitate*, lib. vi.): "The Persons are in a reciprocal relation." Anselm says: "They are in *se invicem*."

one of which, not even the Father, would exist without the others. Thus it is not requisite to the divine Unity that it should especially exist for its own sake; but just as the Triality eternally breaks forth from the divine *οὐσία* as the Unity, so also the difference of the Three leads back by itself to Unity, and thus the Unity of the Three is eternally produced by the Three. This dogmatic definition of the *περιχώρησις* does the service of making it always impossible to think the Three Persons as three divided and self-exclusive Individuals.<sup>1</sup> It further serves to assert the distinctions to be real; for were there no distinction, there would no longer be a *circular movement* such as is implied by the technicality. Finally, if the Triality is to be thought of as an eternal *circular movement* of the divine Life, and not merely as a passive being of the Hypostases in each other, then the Triality is again comprehended by that fact in a Unity. What has been said may suffice to show the importance of this definition for doctrinal cognition.

4. It is nevertheless to be stated, that with this and the other leading dogmatic definitions more doctrinal problems than solutions are given. The scientific problems concerning the Trinity afforded by the positions which the Ecclesiastical Doctrine presented, are as follows:—In the first place, the *Περιχώρησις* presupposes a Triality, in which, as its form, the divine Life moves. This suggests a deeper problem, as to the cognition of a Self-diremption in God, without which a circular movement would not even be possible. To see this Self-diremption necessarily verified in the Essence and concept of God, and therefore to derive it from the divine Unity, is the first feature in a synthesis of the Doctrine of the Trinity, by means of which real eternal distinctions in God can alone be secured, both as opposed to Sabellianism and the error which would see in the Three, not differences actually, but merely idle repetitions of one and the self-same thought of God. One instance of such an error appeared in the ancient Church.

But even if it is acknowledged that the divine Unity pro-

<sup>1</sup> A point made expressly prominent by J. Gerhard (ed. Cotta, I. 198, § 93). This definition excludes the view that the divine Essence is a *Genus*, he thinks, or that the *Personæ* are to be thought of as Individuals.

gressively determines itself into Triality in never stiffening process, conversely, since God cannot be divided and portioned into the Triad as into three severed Magnitudes which remain external to each other, every *further* advance will depend upon the apprehension that in the process of the divine Life the distinctions do not of themselves struggle back into unity, into identity,—indeed, they ever render actual and produce their unity, which they eternally bear potentially in their common Essence, in the Principle of the Whole, so that the true—that is, the living—Unity exists not merely in spite of the distinctions, but by their means.

Finally, the Ecclesiastical Doctrine suggests the problem, that after the immanent Trinity has thus freely come to perfection in itself, inasmuch as the world of the divine Economy only regressively comes to repose therein, the *advance* will now be progressively won from the *immanent Trinity* to the *economic*.

These problems are not yet solved by the inquiries already made. The Church has, it is true, acknowledged, as a beginning, that the two forms of Monarchianism, the deistic form and the pantheistic, *i.e.* the double denial possible of distinctions in God, are untenable; and that distinctions are consequently to be somehow supposed, since even the Doctrine of the divine Attributes could not otherwise be purely maintained, and because the distinctions between the Three divine Principles of Salvation, by which Christian faith lives, could not be otherwise preserved (see pp. 364, etc.). But in such an introduction it is not clear how the *distinctions* issue from the divine Unity; nor, conversely, how the Triality leads back to the divine Unity. The proof of the possibility and necessity of both points can only be found in a synthesis of the Doctrine of the Trinity, upon which must depend, even if a mere approximation is made to a consecutive and successful result, not assurance as to immediate faith and its facts, but rejoicing apprehension and confession. The consequence of such more precise definition of the distinctions or the Triality will be, that just as the advance from the First Member of the Triality to the Second and Third will show itself to be necessary, so also the Third will lead back to the First and Second, and the Second, through the Third, to the First. Little as from the

*economic* standpoint faith in a plurality of divine distinctions can be absent, there was nevertheless long wanting in the ancient Christian Doctrine the development of the Unity into the Triality, or the proof that the Unity defines itself as Triality. So long as the Triad is not derived from the living divine Unity, it has something contingent about it, which will always reveal itself in the form of Sabellianism or Subordinationism, until the investigations into these two aberrations become extinct *in the dogmatic apprehension* that and why God must be thought of as a Trinity.

§ 30.—*Essays at the Synthesis of the Divine Tri-unity.*

The essays at Synthesis begin with physical, with grammatical and logical, and with psychological analogies, which are supposed to prove the *possibility* of a Triality in Unity. Next, attempts are made to verify the *necessity* of the Triad, partly in a more ideal manner from thought, and partly in a manner more realistic from volition, although Melancthon unites both modes. The age of the Reformation generally has simply accepted the Doctrine of the Trinity in the form in which it was inherited, without moulding and reconstructing that doctrine dogmatically by means of the newly won principle of faith, which became a new starting-point for Christian apprehension. But if the two main sections of doctrine, the theological and the anthropo-soteriological, are not elaborated homogeneously, and at one casting, so to speak, their indissoluble coherence insufficiently appears. It is therefore conceivable how in the eighteenth century first an indifference to the Doctrine of the Trinity manifested itself, and then an alienation from that doctrine, with increasing universality and enmity. The consequence of that alienation was, that the Doctrine of the Trinity ceased to be a living factor; there was a second emergence of the old opposites, Subordinationism and

Sabellianism, and thereupon the open appearance of the motive principles in these two heresies, viz. Deism and Pantheism, therefore of the pre-Christian ideas of God. The former was the motive power, although latent, in the new Arianism, and, in a second series, in Socinianism and Rationalism; the pantheistic principle, on the other hand, appeared in great philosophic systems, until the more recent Theology began in many ways to undertake the problem of advancing to the positive establishment of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and to its filiation with the Protestant principle, whilst it at the same time undertook the vanquishing of the deistic and pantheistic principles. For this endeavour to be satisfactory, it was pre-eminently necessary that the problem be solved—how to think of God that His Transcendence and His Immanence in the world be secured and correctly combined, *i.e.* that the Christian ethical idea of God be secured (comp. § 27, Conclusion).

1. If the Logos in God was in the second century distinguished from God, that distinction was partly a mere perfecting of the statements of Scripture, and not an attempt at the synthesis of the Trinity, and since the Logos was frequently thought as a mere ideal world which God evoked before the visible, that distinction is to be rather called a synthesis of the creation of the world or of its preparation. The attempts at the synthesis of the Doctrine of the Trinity are introduced by analogies from the different spheres of the world, as, for example, the *Number Three* has had from antiquity a noteworthy and peculiar sanctity. But all analogies could at best vouch for possibility. The image of *light* is used as a *physical* analogy, which is in itself one, but which radiates and warms. Similarly the tri-unity is employed as an image—of fire, lustre, and heat,—of the spring, flow, and stream (Tertullian),—of the colours of the rainbow, in which the one light yields different aspects (Gregory of Nyssa),—of the root, stem, and branches,—of flowers, their form, colour, and smell (Luther). A triality, says Augustine, belongs even to vision—to the

object, the sense, and the intention or will to see. Augustine also adduces from the physical sphere the triality of *esse, posse, velle*. More recent writers add that all life needs a multiplicity of factors. They say that a burning light itself requires the combustible material, the light which kindles, and the atmosphere, which are combined to form one process. They say that the basis of all harmonies is the musical tritone. Similarly they say there are three elementary colours, red, yellow, and blue, which together form white.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, John of Damascus says that the creature is an inadequate image of the immutable Deity.

2. The *logical and grammatical* analogies were especially elaborated by Abelard. He reckons in such analogies the three degrees of inference, universal, particular, singular,—the three grammatical persons, I, Thou, He, which not only presuppose an identity of essence, but even according to number are not necessarily different, since one and the same person becomes in different relations I, Thou, or He. Still we certainly have not in these analogies a threefold internal relation of God to Himself. The latter image would signify an interchangeableness of the three divine distinctions. Finally, Abelard adduces the analogy of the seal, its impression, or the image of the seal in the material, and the relation of the two to one another in likeness.

Most frequently the teachers of the Church, Augustine, Anselm, the Lombard, and Richard of St. Victor, linger upon *psychological analogies* which it is possible to base on the resemblance between God and man. The most perfect image of the Trinity, says Augustine, is the thought of the inner man, not sensuous and external cognition, but that of the self-consciousness; as the three elements of which, he gives prominence to the *memoria* or the inwardness of the spirit, its self-inclusion; to the formation of thought, by means of which the spirit proceeds out of itself, and itself becomes an object, *intelligentia* (or *mens*); finally, to love (*amor*), which presents the closest unity of *memoria* and *intelligentia*. *Mens meminī sui, intelligit se, diligit se, si hoc cernimus, trinitatem cernimus.*<sup>2</sup> Similarly Anselm. The λόγος is frequently regarded as

<sup>1</sup> Comp. e.g. Christlieb, *Der christliche Gottesbegriff*, 1867.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. *De Trinitate*, xi. 5, xv. 21; see A. Dorner, *Augustinus*, 1873.



the mirror, in which the Father beholds Himself.<sup>1</sup> Anselm elaborates the doctrine of Augustine as follows: the self-existent God thinks and speaks; that which is thought, or the thought of God simply, is, he says, *the Word*, not like human thought remaining in the pure inwardness of God, nor answering imperfectly merely to the inward thought, but representing the *mens divina* in an eternally perfect manner; finally, love, in his esteem, as the perfect harmony of will, issues necessarily from the self-consciousness, because in the latter the knower coalesces into unity with the known.<sup>2</sup> Still Augustine's Doctrine of the Trinity manifestly inclines to resolve that doctrine into fundamental divine attributes. The Spirit is Goodness; the Son, Wisdom; the Father, as potential Inwardness, represents Power; by means of these three, God is the highest good, as also the Lombard and Hugo of St. Victor teach. On the other hand, Richard of St. Victor<sup>3</sup> does not see the Trinity in these three attributes, but sees in Love the source of the Trinity; the Trinity is to him the realization of love, or the divine life of love is realized inasmuch as it makes itself trinitarian. To be *verus, amor* must have an object; to be absolute *amor*, it must have an absolute object; and thus must have as object, not the world, but the Son of love, who is Himself loving. The more particular delineation of the trinitarian life of love is this with Richard: the Father loves the Son, but the Son loves the Father *redamando*. Thus their love, he maintains, runs asunder according to opposite tendencies. It is only gathered and united in the *condilectio*, or in the fact that they meet in an absolute object of love. But this theory, accepted with much approbation even in later times,<sup>4</sup> does not sufficiently allow for a distinction to become evident in the Three (especially in the two first). They approximate too closely to a threefold repetition of one and the same. Love already appears, according to this view, in each of the three as complete of itself; and the Triality is required, not for the constituting of love at all, but only for the *effectuation* of love which is already existent. If then

<sup>1</sup> It is so regarded by the work *De Sina et Zion*, compare my *Gesch. der Christologie*, vol. i. p. 758.

<sup>2</sup> *Monologium*, 32, 49, 57.

<sup>3</sup> *De Trinitate*, iii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Especially by Liebner and Sartorius.

the three divine loving Personalities are thought after the manner of a family, God is again represented as a generic Unity.<sup>1</sup> The Hypostasis of the Holy Ghost, where love is assumed to be the starting-point, is derived in this way: the perfect love of Two desires the associated enjoyment or the *consortium* of an equal Third.<sup>2</sup> But why only of a Third? It is, on the other hand, to be acknowledged that Richard does not, as Augustine does, pass at a bound from intelligence to volition to obtain the third Hypostasis, but he derives the whole Trinity from Love of itself. Duns Scotus endeavours to derive a plurality from the *φύσις* of God generally, instead of from love. In God there is, he says, a real production to be supposed, *fecunditas aliqua*, which is not *ad extra* merely, for the world is not eternal, nor is the world equal to infinite productivity, as Raymond a Sabunde adds. But by that means a Triality is not verified, but only an indefinite plurality.

*Observation.*—Melanchthon's famous essay<sup>3</sup> attaches itself to Athanasius, Augustine, and Anselm, but is not so harmoniously worked out as the essay of Richard of St. Victor. He says: *Æternus Pater est veluti mens: hic sese intuens et perfecte cognoscens cogitatione ista gignit imaginem suam, non evanescentem sed ὑποστατικήν καὶ ἰσοούσιον*. Self-reflection may give us an adumbration of the fact, he thinks. By our thought images are formed; but whilst our thoughts are only shadows, inasmuch as we cannot transfuse our very selves into them, it is otherwise with God; the Father communicates His Essence to the Son, whom He thinks, and just so the will or love of the Father and the Son is communicated to the Spirit. The principle of the process of the Spirit is, he says, the reciprocal and self-regarding love of the Father and Son: *hoc mutuo amore qui proprie est voluntatum, procedit spiritus sanctus qui est agitator ab æterno patre et filio*. He attributes *gignere*

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the *Glaubenslehre* of Plitt, 1863, i. pp. 149, etc., 158, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly Schöberlein says in his *Grundlehren des Heils*, that love, for example, of a friend or a husband desires a third, in whom it effectuates itself in its reciprocity, upon whom it rests. Only this reason does not show why a third should only follow from it, and not a fourth as well, and so on, and thus proves too much.

<sup>3</sup> *Corp. Reformatorum*, xv. 1274, xxiii. 235, and especially xxv. 19. Compare in addition the important work of Herrlinger, *Die Theologie Melanchthons in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 1879, pp. 179–182.

to the *intelligentia*, *productio* to the *voluntas*: *quia voluntas est sedes amoris et agitationis*. This theory, adopted by Morneus, Keckermann, Hugo Grotius, but otherwise little or suspiciously regarded, ever leads notwithstanding to beginning the process, it is true, with self-consciousness, but at the final step to passing over into a process of will or of love, a method which always inclines in turn to that of Augustine, which refers the distinctions between Son and Spirit to the difference between cognition and love.<sup>1</sup>

3. In the time of the Reformation the ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Trinity receded at first before the immediately ethical and religious interest, which sought and found its satisfaction in justifying faith. Melancthon has no Doctrine of the Trinity in the first edition of his *Loci*, so highly praised by Luther, but preferred the anthropological and soteriological doctrines to the objective doctrines generally. Of these high things he thought we could know nothing, and to know much about them is also manifestly unnecessary: salvation lies in justifying faith in Christ. Certainly his *fides* always contains the elements of a doctrine of the Trinity,—the divine Essence of the Son, which the worship of the Son demands, and the difference of the Holy Spirit from the creature as from God generally; but there is undeniably in his first edition a striking relegation of the Doctrine of the Trinity to the background, the cause of which lay in the too one-sided, metaphysical, and mysterious position and form that doctrine had assumed, seeing that for a thousand years it had no longer been in living movement, but had rather become a traditional doctrinal inheritance, the relation of which to the religious interests and the practically religious roots of which had been quite forgotten. By means of the Doctrine of the Trinity, Athanasius had been able to verify the perfect revelation of God in Christ and the Holy Spirit as opposed to Arianism. Through this doctrine it is possible, he said, for

<sup>1</sup> It is an advance therefore when Leibnitz, in his opposition to Wissowatius, and after him Lessing, exhibit trinitarian features in the self-consciousness of itself, without recurrence to the will, as Richard did in the will. The spirit must apprehend itself to be trinitarian, for it is *id quod intelligit, quod intelligitur, et id quod intelligit et intelligitur*. Even the Dogmatic Theologians of the Church, such as Buddeus, require the attributes of cognition and will not to be allotted to persons; the *mens*, for example, rather belongs in their esteem to the common essence of all persons.

us to have in Christ, as the absolute Word of God, true cognition of God. But how greatly had the fact become changed in the course of the traditional transmission of the doctrine! What used to be regarded as explanatory and illustrative, was now regarded as a new mystery more and more remote from cognition. What had once served to solve a difficult problem, had now become an enigma which increasingly lost connection with the religious life, and dogmatic definitions were prosecuted more because of ecclesiastical authority than from insight into the religious necessity of the Doctrine of the Trinity. Thus in Melanchthon even it was mere reverence for ecclesiastical antiquity which led him afterwards to take up the Doctrine of the Trinity in his *Loci Communes*, and to venture upon that attempt at synthesis which has been previously mentioned. But Melanchthon's attempt rests again upon the mere metaphysics of the common self-consciousness, instead of seeking for an internal coherence of the Doctrine of the Trinity with the religious principle of the Reformation; it even has a mere loose connection with the history of the divine revelation, and therefore with the Christian faith. Although Luther for his part had the living conviction that all Christian doctrines are comprised in justifying faith and have therein attained divine confirmation,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless that conviction was not yet applied to the establishment of the Doctrine of God, and especially to the Trinity. Certain as it was that evangelical faith was a new and higher position relatively to Christianity, still little advantage accrued to the Doctrine of the Trinity from the newly won standpoint and the prospects therein afforded. Inasmuch as that doctrine was not regarded under a new aspect, and one in intimate connection with the Reformation principle, and was not formulated in harmony therewith, but was simply taken over in a form which an earlier stage of the Church had created, there was a hiatus between the principal Reformation doctrines and the inheritance of trinitarian doctrine, which was only imperfectly bridged according to the fundamental positions of the evangelical churches by reference to ecclesiastical authority. It was no wonder that Melanchthon, being sensible of this, gives expression to the opinion that "he anticipates a time

<sup>1</sup> *Art. Smalc.* p. 305, 5.

of great storms which would break out against the Doctrine of the Trinity and Christology in its traditional form.”<sup>1</sup>

4. These storms broke loose soon enough. At first they showed themselves at a distance in phenomena without the Church. But they were also to penetrate within and shake the Church. The Church was thus to perceive once more what it loses when the Doctrine of the Trinity is not made use of as its living possession; it was to perceive that in that case Christology relapses into Ebionitism, that without a Doctrine of the Trinity even justification by faith cannot maintain itself in the face of logical thought, and that of necessity the pre-Christian ideas of God of a deistic and pantheistic kind recrudescence.

The firm and intimate agreement of the fundamental Reformation cognition of justifying faith with the Doctrine of the Trinity was to be initiated by an endeavour to discover whether the Christian spirit could not do wholly without this inherited doctrine; for not by a traditional burdening with this doctrine as with a useless thing, but only by the experiment of wholly putting it aside, could it become clear beyond all question, whether that doctrine has an internal connection with faith at its evangelical stage, with the certainty of faith, and whether the knowledge of faith was of any power or not. Only by the latter process can this doctrine, instead of being a burden, become once more a matter of conscious joy.

### § 30b. *Continuation.*

#### *Recent Essays at Synthesis.*

The attempts at a reconstruction of the ancient Doctrine of the Trinity, which have in more recent times succeeded the decomposition of the eighteenth century, either start from the idea of the world (or the world-idea) in God, or recur to the internal Essence peculiar to God, and seek to arrive at a Trinity, whether from physical categories or from a logical process or by means of love.

<sup>1</sup> *Corpus Reformatorum*, II. 660, 661.

1. Preludes of an antitrinitarian movement already showed themselves without the Church on the Subordinationist side in the deistic Unitarianism of the Socinians, as well as on the Sabellian side. Inside the Church the deistic movement began with *Arminianism* and the older Supernaturalism. Its Subordinationist battle-cry was, *Aseity belongs to God alone*.<sup>1</sup> The keystone of the ancient doctrine, the *ὁμοουσία* of the Son and Spirit with the Father, being removed, a mere Subordinationism was left which might for a little while endeavour to secure itself by combination with Sabellian elements from the purely creaturely character of the Son, from Ebionitism of an angelological or anthropological kind.<sup>2</sup> But this Subordinationism only found its way out of its artificiality and vague hybridity, when the admitted principle of Deism fulfilled its destiny, as happened in the Rationalism of the Wolfian School.<sup>3</sup> Wegscheider says: *Omnem pluralitatem in deo rationi aperte repugnare.—Quamlibet trinitatis explicationem philosophicam, vel unum subjectum et triplicem ejus relationem seu operationem, vel tria subjecta intelligendi et volendi facultate propria defendentem necessario abire vel in Sabellianismi vel in Tritheismi aut Arianismi errores.* But Wegscheider does not discuss the positive element at all, which the Church would have,—does not discuss, that is to say, to use Gerhard's words, the relations of God not to the world only, but to Himself—diverse modes of the divine existence which are to be distinguished. But that the true Unity of God as opposed to Heathenism or Pantheism, and at the same time a living idea of this Unity as opposed to Judaism or lifeless Deism, are only secured by the Triality of the One, was first demonstrated in the antitrinitarian Rationalism. The older Rationalism opposes the world to God in so self-dependent a manner, that God and the world are foreign to each other, that the world neither receives nor desires the communication or communion of God, and that God in His Exaltation is neither disposed nor able to communicate and reveal

<sup>1</sup> Whiston and Samuel Clarke, 1712, belong to this class. In Germany, Töllner, 1760; Flatt, 1781; Döderlein.

<sup>2</sup> Thus, according to Paul Maty, 1720, God, i.e. the Spirit of God, is supposed to have allied Himself with a pre-existent, high, creaturely Essence, which assumed humanity in Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Wegscheider, *Instit.* §§ 92, 89.

Himself. Just as religion thus comes to an end as far as man was concerned, and a mere morality remains; so God becomes a lifeless and remote Essence limited by the world, and ceases to be absolute. Therefore this Monarchianism ended in doubt upon the divine existence. Such an empty, inactive, unknown, supreme Unity can no longer lay claim to the name of God. For power, life, freedom, love, are thus transferred to the world.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, even the idea of God in the so-called Biblical Supernaturalism only allows the deistic relation of God to the world to be occasionally broken by miracles and revelations.

Even Sabellianism revived. Already in the days of the Reformation it was maintained, especially by Campanella, Servetus, and others.<sup>2</sup> In non-pantheistic form Clericus would have a mere Trinity of revelation,—not distinctions in the divine Essence, but distinctions in the divine Thoughts merely.<sup>3</sup> The One God may have, he opined, diverse relations to thoughts of the world. Series of thoughts which are diverse, but which are successive with us, are simultaneous, he says, in God. According to one series of thoughts, therefore, God is called Father, and according to another Son. Reusch,<sup>4</sup> as a Wolffian, develops this as follows: God as the Father has the most perfect mental representation of the possible, as the Son the union of these possibilities with all the systems of the world, as Spirit the most perfect knowledge of the best world resulting upon a comparison of these systems. So on the side of the will God is, he thinks, *voluntas primitiva, media, finalis*. This would be Modalism, and would refer indeed to three Principles in God, which would only have an immediate relation to the world, and which would only allow the world to appear as a development of the diverse modes, not of the divine Being, but of the divine Activity or Energy. The System of Swedenborg is also Sabellian, as is Samuel Urlsperger.

<sup>1</sup> Rühr's *Letters on Rationalism*, 1813, maintain quite a fatalistic mechanism in the course of the world, which they ingeniously unite with a Pelagian Doctrine of Freedom.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Trechsel, *Die Antitrinitarier*, and Tollin, *Michael Servetus*, 1877.

<sup>3</sup> *Liberii de S. Amore Epistola*, Irenopolis, 1679. He became an Arian later on.

<sup>4</sup> *Introductio in theologiam revelatam*.

2. Of more scientific importance are, first, the systems of Schelling and Hegel. They would oppose a living God to the dead deistic view of the world common to Rationalism and Supernaturalism; they would therefore think of God, not as Substance, with Spinoza, but as Movement and as Subject. Seeing that they are in search of a more living idea of God, they cannot but acknowledge distinctions in Him, and they boast of having restored the dogma of a divine Tri-unity which had been quite surrendered by Supernaturalism. Hegel calls the Trinity the pole of the world; Schelling addresses himself, in his *Philosophy of Mythology*, to proving that the diversity of religions arises from a Triality of divine Potences, which he also endeavours to derive speculatively. It is impossible to deny that these systems have done the service of having achieved something for the metaphysical foundations of the concept of the Trinity.

But Schelling in his earlier system, and Hegel, halted at a doctrine according to which God might have finiteness as an essential element in Himself; they introduce passivity, change, and mutation into God, and allow that He raises Himself from a potential existence in the world to actuality in the course of a trinitarian process. The divine Unity is supposed to attain life, motion, distinctiveness, by the fact that the Godhead in its explication and actuality becomes the world. The world is the *Son* of God in these systems, is God in another form, viz. in plurality. Finally, inasmuch as God returns into Himself from out of the plurality of the world, that is to say, inasmuch as God becomes conscious of Himself in man, in whom He thinks Himself, God is Spirit, it is said. But since the world is in process and is not complete, God cannot be absolute therein as Spirit, and since He is not supposed to know Himself otherwise than in it, God is only possibly absolute Spirit: of Himself He is merely a potentiality or a germ. The world would be nothing else than God Himself in movement never perfectly realized.<sup>1</sup> Therefore Schleiermacher has rightly refused to accompany them along this road, which simply leads to a progressive God, but would cleave to a self-identical Exaltation

<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer, and Hartmann's Unconscious (which is mere potentiality, like Schopenhauer's Will), have therefore been able to attach themselves to Schelling's earlier system.



of God above the world and mutability. He turns back to the Christian concept of God, inasmuch as he would think of God not as the power or as the unity of the world, but as the absolute Causality.<sup>1</sup> And, on the other hand, he also rejects the deistic concept of God as a dead God.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless he definitely declares himself for the Sabellian mode of thought as contrasted with the Athanasian, and would stand aloof from all distinctions in God. Inasmuch as God, in his esteem, persists of Himself in immoveable Self-identity of act and being, and is merely the principle of the world and its opposites, he has not in this unity, which is absolutely without distinctions, in this pure Being as the highest and innermost in God, the possibility of deriving the world from God, he has missed the bridge by which God might possibly reveal Himself in many ways in the world, and especially might reveal Himself in the Son and Spirit, to which revelations his faith nevertheless holds fast. The difficulties in which the supposition becomes entangled, that the One absolutely simple and absolutely Self-identical God remains on his side in an eternally identical relation to the world, but is reflected back from the world in diverse ways because of its varying receptivity, have been previously (p. 370) considered. It is impossible to deny the deistic element latent therein.

But since God, in order to be thought even as the Causality of the many-sided real world, must have a fulness in Himself, and cannot be a mere Identity, for that would be a negation of distinctions, it is not to be wondered at that the more important part of Schleiermacher's School has not followed him in this respect, but has essayed a construction of the Doctrine of the Trinity—an essay to which most of the more important recent Dogmatic Theologians, and partly recent philosophers also, have especially applied themselves, with more or less clearness as to the necessity of their undertaking.

3. The more recent attempts at the synthesis of the Doctrine of the Trinity by means of the eternal *world-idea*. Whilst Hegel and Schelling (in his earlier works) apply the life of the actual world and of the spirit to the Trinity, the philoso-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. his *Dialektik* and his *Glaubenslehre*, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Runze, *Schleiermacher's Lehre von Gottes Gerechtigkeit*, 1877.

phers K. Ph. Fischer,<sup>1</sup> Weisse<sup>2</sup> (likewise Fichte the younger), aim at allowing the concept of God to complete itself to Absoluteness, which Hegel and Schelling did not attain, since the world is not to them perfected but in process; for the contention of these philosophers is, that even apart from the real world God is eternally in Himself absolutely perfect. To this contention they are led by the endeavour to recall the Doctrine of the Trinity from abstract heights, and to bring it into union with the world which is buoyant with life. Since a second thing different from Self pertains to Self-consciousness, from which God distinguishes Himself, the supposition is, they say, necessary, that God eternally effects His Self-consciousness by the conception of the thought of something different to Himself, or of the world-idea, of the ideal world, which Weisse associates with the *κόσμος νοητός* of the Alexandrian school, of their Logology and their doctrine of Angels. But if the divine Self-consciousness first makes itself effective by means of the world-idea or the ideal world, the world-idea is no longer to be derived from a Self-conscious free God; it must rather arise from the non-consciously working fundamental Nature of God, since it is supposed to precede the divine Self-consciousness, and to make that consciousness effective for God. It could also only effectuate His Self-consciousness for God, if it were a perfectly adequate counterpart of Him. But with what right is this image, which is equivalent to God, and which is requisite to Self-consciousness, straightway called the world-idea or the ideal world? It might indeed even be God Himself, and then this image of God might be the archetype of the world. Why is God supposed first to think something different to Himself? Moreover, Weisse thinks of the Father as the primary Foundation, the primary Essence, and designates Him Fulness in repose (*complexus rerum intelligibilium*), like the *Memoria* of Augustine:<sup>3</sup> he calls Him the primary Foundation who thinks Himself, that is, the Foundation of Deism, pure Potentiality. The Son, on the other hand, is to Weisse the *Foundation* which causes intellectually the divine

<sup>1</sup> *Idee der Gottheit*, 1839.

<sup>2</sup> *Philos. Dogmatik*, I. ; *Studien und Kritik*. 1841.

<sup>3</sup> *Philos. Dogmatik*, I. p. 437.

world of feeling or phantasy (*intellectus*), together with the infinite ideal impulse to production, which is of itself the God of Pantheism. The Spirit is to him the moral Will, which teleologically or ethically wills the ideal world. Conversely, K. Ph. Fischer describes the divine Son to be primary Will, or to be the intellectual Love of God to Himself; and, on the other hand, he describes the Holy Spirit to be Intelligence or the primary Spirit, just as in man the *natural*, the *psychical*, and the *spiritual* factors work in harmony. But by Weisse and Fischer Son and Spirit are merely distinguished as attributes.

If Weisse describes the Holy Spirit as Love and the Son as Wisdom, and Fischer endeavours to make the converse plausible, it simply shows that both, Cognition and Will, are inseparable, and that, when reference is made to Son and Spirit, a share in both cognition and will is to be ascribed to each, although not in like manner.

Related to this Doctrine of the Trinity, which becomes possible because of the world-idea in God, is Lücke's theory.<sup>1</sup> Lücke recognises the necessity for Christian faith to acknowledge a basis in God for the threefold divine revelation, but he would not have a Triality in and for the internal life itself of God. He only sees in God the Unity of three eternal Principles of Revelation, which are ever ready or disposed, so to speak, to break forth into realization, as they do when the time is fulfilled. God contracts Himself at the challenge of the world, as it were, to the threefold work of revelation, the parts of which work are contrasted in time, but with God and in God are eternally one.<sup>2</sup> In this way Lücke endeavours to raise the Economical Trinity, which does not in the Sabellian mode of thought transcend the transient and contingent, to an eternal importance, and this is an advance. But we might still have in such a view a mere Trinity of the divine world-idea and not of God Himself, or to speak more accurately, a Trinity passively related to the world, although Lücke acknowledges in God three eternal real Potentialities as regards revelation, which have in God their eternal unity of essence. Similarly

<sup>1</sup> *Grundriss der evang. Dogmatik*, 1845, p. 124, and *Stud. und Krit.* 1840.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly Von Hofmann, more clearly than in his *Schriftbeweis*, in his *Einführung zur theol. Ethik*, 1878.

Beyschlag.<sup>1</sup> He would have a transcendental basis for the Economical Trinity, a Trinity which is ontological, premundane, and supramundane, but not separate from the world; the idea of the world, as it culminates in man, is, in his view, eternally in God, an essential element of His triune Essence, and not of His Will only. The idea of man as primary humanity constitutes, he thinks, the distinguishing feature of the Second Hypostasis from the First, and gives rise generally to Self-discrimination in God. He ascribes a reality in God to the world-idea or archetypal humanity (*Urmenschheit*) in God. How far it can have such reality he does not make clear; especially is it not considered how anything impersonal can be archetypal humanity. There is also a danger in this supreme reference, of a confusion of God with the world, as in the case of Apollinaris, to whom the *Λόγος* is archetypal man.

A somewhat greater advance is made by Twesten.<sup>2</sup> "God's immanent and transient Being must coincide," he says; "and therefore the former must be known from the latter. Now the world of revelation is a plurality, God a unity. The transition from unity to this plurality of revelation which has its base in God is only to be accomplished by the middle-term of the divine thought, which creatively embraces the world, and which is eternal in God. But that thought is also God Himself, that is to say, the internal Word of God, the radiance of His Majesty, and the image of His Essence." Thus the world as real would be the external Word of God, and the world as conceived the internal Word, a determination of God Himself, and we should have the duality of the primary Basis or Essence and of the Revealer, that is to say, of Him in whom the primary Essence is revealed. But a *third* is to be added, according to Twesten. "God, that is to say, must be *known*, and this is only possible by God. Now the Principle of the internal communication, by means of which Knowledge arises, is the Spirit, the Principle of subjective revelation, whilst the Logos is the Principle of objective divine revelation. But as God reveals Himself, so is He; since otherwise He would not be revealed. The principles or

<sup>1</sup> *Christologie N. T.*, 1866, pp. 249, etc.

<sup>2</sup> II. p. 199; comp. Liebner, I. 226.

elements of revelation are also to be based and comprehended in the internal Essence of God." And at this point Twisten<sup>1</sup> appends a luminous exposition of the immanent Trinity from the divine Self-consciousness. In order to distinguish yet more precisely than he does here God's image of Himself from the world-image in God, Nitzsch on the other hand maintains trinitarian distinctions in God, which precede every counsel upon the world and the world-idea, but apart from any attempt at synthesis on their part. Even Lücke's ground-plan, since the Trinity of revelation must have its basis not in the world but in God Himself, seems inclined to assume an ontological trinitarian culmination in God Himself, but one which is merely mystery.<sup>2</sup>

4. If we now direct our gaze to the more recent essays at the derivation of the Trinity without intermixture of the idea of God with that of the world, or of the trinitarian distinctions with differences in the attributes, those attempts scarcely deserve mention which attach themselves to the position of the more recent philosophers,—that *life* demands a variety of several factors.<sup>3</sup> Apart from any other criticism, plurality is not triality. There is more promise in the derivation from *spiritual* life. This is primarily undertaken from the self-consciousness, after numerous predecessors from Athanasius to Lessing. This method is adopted, amongst others, by Billroth, Sengler, Zukrigl, and Günther, who apply to the Trinity the triality of proposition, opposition, æquipollency (*Satz, Gegensatz, Gleichsatz*).<sup>4</sup> The defect in theories of this kind of themselves is, that no real distinction is wont to be reached for the second member, but a mere ideal conception as objective. And there is commonly gained in the third member a distinctiveness co-ordinate with the other two; but—it either enters as the sum of the other two, or as the result of the process, and that in such a way that the third member becomes itself the absolute divine Personality.

<sup>1</sup> II. pp. 203, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Lücke, *Grundriss der evang. Dogmatik*, 1845, pp. 124, etc.

<sup>3</sup> So Oislinger in his treatise upon the Trinity, which presupposes, however, distinctions in God to be given, and is therefore occupied with the problem of their union.

<sup>4</sup> Comp. Cölestin, 1834; Billroth, *Religionsphilosophie*; Twisten, II. pp. 203, etc.; Sengler, *Idee Gottes*.

Schelling proceeded in a more realistic manner by means of his doctrine of Potencies.<sup>1</sup> This was a construction upon a *metaphysical* or *ontological* foundation. In his later System he endeavours from the Metaphysics of the spirit as free, from the Ontology of Freedom, to show that God must be thought as triune. He presupposes God as eternally personal, quite apart from the ideal and the real; but this knowledge of the eternal internal divine Personality comes to us by God's own act, or by His Self-demonstration, in metaphysical Empiricism, *i.e.* by *that* concept of history which penetrates into its eternal and living core. But what we may know in a purely rational manner, are the Potencies, which comprehend the domain of the possibilities which lie in the idea of pure being, or the possible forms of being. He distinguished three Potencies or forms of being, from which the divine Life as well as the life of the world may be understood,—potential existence, necessary existence, and proposed existence (*das Sein-könnende, das Sein-müssende, und das Sein-sollende*). The first is being in itself; the second, the pure act of being (or pure being surrendered); the third is being which exists in itself, or self-possessed being, which is also in act potency, and is act even in potency, and because of both together, act and potency, is spirit. Now these three forms of being are eternally united in God, and God is thus personal and free spirit. In order that a world may exist, these united potencies are disorganized, and thus they exist in the world separately; they constitute the matter, form, and end of the world (*causa materialis, formalis, finalis*). The history of the world is, he further thinks, characterized in its epochs according to the preponderance of these three potencies. He makes the following application of this doctrine to the Trinity. True Monotheism is the unity of the three potencies. The supremacy of the first of these graduated potencies is, in his esteem, the time of the Tautousia—answering to Sabellianism; the supremacy of the second is that which finds the Son in the world, the Heterousia,—Arianism; whilst the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schelling's construction in his *Philosophie der Offenbarung*, in which his rational philosophy is to be assumed. Comp. my treatise upon "Schelling's Potenzenlehre," *Jahrb. f. deutsche Theol.* V. 1, and Heyder in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, XIII. pp. 531, etc., article on Schelling.

completion in the Homoousia is yet to come. But Schelling does not make his idea of the Personality of God clear; just as little as he gives a clear account of the potencies which are in eternal harmony in God, but which cannot have a second extra-divine existence in the world, into which they enter as finite and progressive, and how the absolute divine Personality nevertheless must not be involved in the process of development. Either a merely apparent world seems to be arrived at, or a dissolution of the divine Unity, whether by Self-reduplication for the sake of the world, or by Self-depotentiation and Passivity, out of which unity can only arise a second time by means of a process of development.

Rothe does not halt at Self-consciousness or the volitional aspect, but derives a Trinity in God Himself from the Metaphysics of *Personality* generally, and a Trinity of a no mere attributive kind, but he halts at the threefold and peculiar divine mode of subsistence, although he retains an antagonistic attitude to the ecclesiastical form of the Doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>1</sup> The Biblical ideas of Father, Son, and Spirit have only to do, he thinks, with the world of revelation, not with the internal divine Trinity. Nevertheless, such a Trinity seems to him necessary, because only by an eternal process *of a trinitarian nature can God be eternally personal*. The Doctrine of the Trinity, then, which the first edition of his *Theological Ethics* lays down, aims at describing the stages, so to speak, by which the absolute God eternally perfects His Personality. God is, firstly, ESSENCE. As Essence He thinks of a self-included potentiality to be posited, which wishes to work itself without, to objectify itself, to form distinctions outside of itself, to liberate them from within itself. As what is posited, God is, secondly, NATURA, not *factura*; He becomes *natura*, that which is thought, in order to eternally be Personality by means of this interposition. As *natura* He is Himself the *instrument* of His own *Personality*. Just as our corporeal life aids the development of human personality, so in the mode of existence of His *natura* God becomes Himself instrumental in His free self-consciousness or His Personality. His *natura* is, Rothe thinks, the *laterum* whereby God can eternally contrive His Self-consciousness.<sup>2</sup> But,

<sup>1</sup> *Theolog. Ethik*, 1st ed. I. pp. 59, etc.

<sup>2</sup> P. 71.

THIRDLY, he says, God has not yet perfectly objectified Himself, since what is thought and posited is not at the same time God who posits and thinks. In order to perfectly objectify Himself, God must also objectify Himself as the One who posits and thinks, *i.e.* He must subjectify Himself. The God thus posited and thought is Self-consciousness (or Reason) and Spontaneity (or Freedom) combined, is absolute Personality.<sup>1</sup> This is, on the one hand, he says, a completion of the Self-objectivation of God or the conclusion of the *natura*, and, on the other hand, a new and additional form of the Being of God, inasmuch as the nature has thus transcended its idea. Personality, he says, also bears within itself the Essence and the Nature of God.<sup>2</sup> In this synthesis, however, the last member, as absolute Personality, occupies a position which only allows the two other members to be elements in this third member, whilst Rothe notwithstanding wishes to co-ordinate the three members, and to see in the third a new member which is not the mere sum of the other two.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the essays at the synthesis of the Trinity from the divine Love have met with special approbation.<sup>4</sup> Sartorius says: God is personal Love. But love is not without a second, its object, otherwise it is Egoism. The object of love must be a person. *I* demands a *Thou*, Love a duality of personalities. Without this duality, God is, he says, absolute Egoism. The divine Love as *communicativum sui* completely imparts itself. Thus the Father must, with infinite and eternal labour of love, concentrate the whole majesty of the Godhead in a second Self-consciousness, the Son. But,

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 63-65.

<sup>2</sup> P. 68.

<sup>3</sup> P. 67. In the second edition, 1867, I. § 37, p. 142, Rothe has allowed this synthesis to drop, but he has then halted at a mere duality of the Self-included, Personal, and Revealing God.

<sup>4</sup> So in Julius Müller, *Lehre von der Sünde*, 3d ed. II. pp. 182, etc. Without further amplification, Plitt; Meier, *Geschichte der Trinitätslehre*, 2 vols. 1844. Schöberlein, *Grundlehren des Heils*, develops his scheme from the principle of Love, 1848; and *Geheimnisse des Glaubens*, 1872. But especially in Sartorius, *Die heilige Liebe*, 1851, I., and in Liebner, *Die christl. Dogmatik aus dem christol. Princip*, 1849. Besides, comp. Mehring, *Religionsphilosophie*, and the treatise on the Immanent Trinity in Fichte's *Zeitschrift*, new series, V. 2; H. Merz, *Christenthum und Persönlichkeit*, in Stirn's *Studien der wirtsch. Geisteslichkeit*, XV. 1, 2; Alb. Peip, *Trinität*, in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*, XVI. pp. 437-468.



although distinct, they must also be One again. This they are by virtue of the reciprocal love between Father and Son. There thus pertains to love, he says, a Triality : *amare, amari, redamare*. The reciprocated love, the returned love, proceeding from the Father and the Son, does not part, he explains, into two effects, but unites and concentrates its fulness to form the third Hypostasis as Spirit. This synthesis, which is at first sight so attractive, gives to the Spirit no co-equality of origin ; He is only the reciprocated love of the Father and Son, the sum of their love, so to speak ; nor is it proved that the Spirit, like the Son, must be a relatively independent factor in the divine process of love. But even the Son is not made co-equal with the Father in origin ; for the Father is supposed to be absolute in His Self-inclusion apart from the Son, and the Son is only required for the necessary activity of that love, to which an object pertains. Thus Aseity is placed wholly in the Father,—a view which is Subordinationist. But Subordination invariably leads to a form of Tritheism, just as the converse is true.<sup>1</sup> Nor can it be conceded that if God directs His love upon Himself, *Egoism* is the necessary consequence. Since God is absolute Goodness, and consequently is such when as Love he loves, such Self-love is so little egoistic that, on the contrary, there would be nothing any longer deserving of love, if God Himself did not love this Goodness. Everything else can be alone deserving of love because of this Goodness in God. The starting-point is to be the rather found in the Holy divine Love. And finally, this synthesis only attains a *triple repetition* of One and the same Person, that is to say, it attains three absolutely loving Persons. Thus its results are too paltry as regards the distinctions in God. If the Persons are equally and eternally loving, *redamare*, which is both *amare* and *amari*, belongs to them all, and their distinction from one another falls to the

<sup>1</sup> This is the correct view taken by Paip, just as Liebner also rightly insists, that no one of the Hypostases can be thought without the other. Comp. Frank, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, I. pp. 196, etc., who is also correct in rejecting the opinion that the divine Unity (which is, in his esteem, absolute Personality) and the Triality are to be discriminated like generic unity and individual plurality (p. 197). Each of the Hypostases always exists, he says, with the others ; and personally through them, each constitutes in union the divine Personality, which arises by virtue of threefold positing of themselves.

ground at once. In the ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Trinity, the point in question is not a triple supposition of the same Person. The distinction, which Sartorius would allow, is therefore reduced to this,—that the Father alone is originating Love, alone has Aseity, an opinion which, as has been said, leads to Subordinationism, though involuntarily. It becomes a leading problem, instead of giving to the Father, as the Greek Church does, a disturbing predominance at the outset, to define the Aseity in a trinitarian manner as Athanasius does. The three Members of the Trinity are to reciprocally condition each other, and are only to constitute the true divine Idea when related to each other. As far as Love especially is concerned, we shall come to see the three factors in the three Hypostases, by which absolute Love is first eternally constituted, and without which they, and thus the Father, would not be love at all. From the mere activity of love, which is the second aspect only, we shall have to recur to the Metaphysics or Ontology of love. By Sartorius distinctions are only *postulated* in God in relation to the activity of love, and are not verified in themselves; it is merely presupposed that, since love is to be supposed able to *approve itself by its activity*, three divine Objects must be conceded to it. This supposition of distinctions properly applies to the Father only, according to Sartorius; whence the danger involuntarily arises of placing the Son and Spirit in the creaturely sphere. Higher in importance stands Liebner, inasmuch as he has a correct apprehension, that a reciprocal conditioning of the three Hypostases by one another and a unity by means of a triality are to be assumed.<sup>1</sup> Each of the Hypostases, he says, is only a Person *through* and *in* the other Persons; God is a Person in three Persons, which may be allowed to pass, if on the second use of the word Person it is not taken in the same sense as on the first, but in the sense of a threefold mode of existence. God, who is absolutely personal, exists, he says, only as the tri-personal. It is also laudable that he would think of the absolute Life, nay of all the categories of the idea of God, as defined in themselves in a trinitarian manner, so that each of the Hypostases is another mode of existence of the complete divine Attributes or of the God-

<sup>1</sup> Liebner, I. p. 148.

head.<sup>1</sup> But in amplifying these thoughts the Son certainly becomes, in his theory, a mere repetition of the Father; what is ethical in both he presents as fully equal, only that the initiative remains the Father's in the divine Self-origination or Aseity.<sup>2</sup> Each is, to him, separately the Unity of moral freedom and necessity. And their distinction is still more imperilled, when he says of the Father and the Son<sup>3</sup> that They are lost in each other, that in reciprocal Self-surrender They make Themselves non-independent of each other, nay, that They exchange their Self-consciousness, their hypostatic Being,—positions by means of which he hopes to form the theological substructure for his Kenotic Christology, wherein the distinctions in God again lose their stability, as does his whole trinitarian superstructure. This course of reasoning let us neutralize by what he himself says concerning the Holy Spirit. From the duality of the surrender of the Son to the Father and of the Father to the Son, says Liebner, there arises the necessity for a Third to secure distinction in unity, and unity in distinction. The reciprocal surrender would be but an eternal passage from that side to this, and from this to that, for the purpose of making a mean; it would be eternal unrest, unless the process of the life of love came to an end in the Spirit. That They may remain independent of each other in their eternal Self-surrender, a common object of their love is necessary, by which They may be loved, just as They love it, or from which They may receive Themselves back again,—a common object which must be equal to Them, and which must make Them independent of each other. Thus the Spirit is to him the principle of union, of absolute equilibrium, not the entire Godhead, but a new Principle which has its source in God, the condition of the perfect realization of the divine Essence. But since in this synthesis the Son as Love is a mere repetition of the Father, the Principle of union has no opposite such as union requires. After what has been said, it cannot be sufficient to apply the Trinity to the mere

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 124, 129: Thus the Father alone is not Aseity, as many recent writers besides Thomasius would have it, following the lead of Arminius, but Aseity is itself to be thought in a trinitarian manner. Similarly, Voigt, *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* III. 2.

<sup>2</sup> P. 129.

<sup>3</sup> P. 112.

rendering love active; rather by the fact that God is love, which, if it exists, will of course put itself in motion, is God constrained to be triune.

C.—POSITIVE EXPOSITION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE  
HOLY TRI-UNITY.

§ 31.

The Doctrine of the Divine Attributes leads to the Trinity as to its underlying truth. In order to be the actual and absolute Primary Life, Knowledge, and Goodness, the Godhead must be thought as Self-originating and Self-conscious, just as He must be thought as voluntary Love. This is only possible by the Godhead's eternally distinguishing Himself from Himself, and always returning to Himself from His other Self, that is, by God's being triune. Just as God must be trinitarian in all His attributes, so also by means of the Trinity the divine attributes first harmoniously coalesce into the Unity, by which Pantheism and Deism are precluded and Transcendence and Immanence positively combined. But the eternal result of the eternal Self-discrimination of God from Himself, together with the equally eternal re-entrance into Himself, is the *Organism of the absolute divine Personality*, so that only he truly thinks the personal God, who does not deny the triune God, the guarantee of absolute Personality.<sup>1</sup>

1. Our primary question is, what interest faith takes in the Doctrine of the Trinity and the solution of the problems presented thereby. The internal divine Essence, and therefore the immanent or essential Trinity, belongs to the *βάθος θεοῦ* (1 Cor. ii. 11), concerning which the tongue of man but stammers. We have not yet, as Martensen says, a living knowledge and vision thereupon. We cannot possibly transport ourselves into the esoteric majesty of God. To this

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Frank, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, § 14, pp. 44, etc.

point the passage applies, that God dwells as the Triune in a light to which none can approach. In a dark revelation we see now as by means of a glass, not face to face. The sequel to our merely partial knowledge is to be a knowing as we are known. But a knowledge of the outline or the main lineaments is possible according to the same passage,<sup>1</sup> and amongst manifold gifts that of knowledge (Gnosis) is also conferred upon the Church. If there are depths in God unfathomable, He has still vouchsafed to reveal Himself, and it cannot depend upon His revealing will, but only upon ourselves, should we remain in ignorance of what it is most valuable to know instead of in an ever-increasing knowledge of God. God has not willed to remain mere mystery. His depths are also depths of Love which discloses itself to His children. They certainly disclose themselves but gradually to the faithful labour of the Church, and he knows not God, who is content, ready, and satisfied with his labour. But we need not on that account designate the labours of the greatest spirits of the Church after more profound knowledge of God, superfluous prying, or value the results obtained by them as slight. When Thomasius occupies a merely sceptical position relatively to all these labours, he is right in saying that "he cannot allowably base his faith thereon."<sup>2</sup> But faith is not generally supposed to base itself upon science, but science to grow from faith. Because he paid too little heed to this point, Thomasius himself could not help framing a view which proved itself unsatisfactory.<sup>3</sup> It is possible to show incontestably that *faith itself furnishes problems to science*, seeing that it, like the Scriptures, contains a divine Triality, which may be cognized as compatible with the divine Unity, if the spirit as that which believes and that which thinks is supposed to come into actual union with itself. Further, it may be asserted that our age especially needs a living renascence of the apprehension of a triune God, and indeed a new formulation of the concept of God generally by means of that renascence. Let us treat this point first.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> I. p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> His view, like that of Eusebius of Cæsarea, stops at a partial conception, and unites Sabellian elements (a superiority of the Father, who is alone *seorsus eminenti* properly God, in his esteem) with Subordinationist elements.

Attention has been previously called to the fact (§ 30, 3) that the Age of the Reformation did not apply its new knowledge of a combined anthropological and soteriological kind to the Doctrine of the Trinity, but, on the contrary, merely adopted that doctrine in its traditional form, with a perceptibly limited interest in that form. The religious spirit had applied itself, because of the Reformation and from that time on, to the interests concerned in free personality in God. But personality found too little aliment in the traditional form of the Doctrine of the Trinity, especially was the further development of the doctrine of little or no use in scientifically establishing the internal connection between the highest interests of Christian personality and the trinitarian question. But we have also seen the consequence when the two main sections of Christian doctrine—the theological section and the anthropologico-soteriological—stand apart in so heterogeneous and indifferent a manner. The first consequence was alienation from the theological results already gained, then antagonism ensued, and soon, as there was a revivification of the ancient pre-Christian doctrines of God, whether of a more Jewish or Hellenistic kind, the restraining influence of the ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Trinity vanished. In this return of the opposition between the one-sided Immanence and the one-sided Transcendence of God in the world, with either of which the religious interest is equally little satisfied, an admonition is contained against occupying a position which is simply that of non-acceptance of the ecclesiastical Doctrine of the Trinity, just as there is, in the fact that their internal coherence, though in a correspondingly modified form, came into the clear light of consciousness, an impulse to heal the breach which became manifest in the last century in the two main sections of Theology. Indeed, the permanent essence of Christian, and especially of Evangelical faith, even gives rise to the problem how to combine the unity of God together with the internal distinctions in Him with the idea of God as triune; for faith recurs of itself to such distinctions in God. The objective persistence of eternal distinctions in God is the necessary presupposition in faith, as regards personal communion with God. This persistence is the ground in fact, which is present and efficient in faith, that spiritual, that

divine and human reality. For, in the first place, the objective basis of our communion with God is contained in the theanthropic personality of Christ. Allied with Him, we know ourselves in Him allied and reconciled with God. But this would be impossible, if there did not dwell in Him all the fulness of the Godhead, if there were not in Him a peculiar and permanent being of the Godhead, which has no existence without Him, a mode of the being of God, which refers to an internal distinction of God in Himself as its secure and eternal ground. Faith could itself no longer maintain its integrity if it allowed itself to acquiesce in the view that there is in Christ, the Son of God, a mere communication of a divine might to the man Jesus, instead of a peculiar divine causality in saving. Christ could no longer be to us the Redeemer, united with whom we are united with the Godhead Himself, unless God were in Him essentially as our Redeemer,—if we had to regard Jesus as an inspired man and a mere creature like ourselves.<sup>1</sup> The anti-trinitarian movements of recent times have made it perfectly clear that there consequently only remains the choice either to think of God in a unitarian manner, and in that case to see even in Jesus a mere man, or, if He is supposed to be the God-man, to hold to eternal distinctions in God, and therefore to undertake to prove that the unity of God is quite consistent with such distinctions. But faith, that divine work, *equally* bears upon it the signature of the Holy Spirit, the consciousness of His Immanence in the heart and in the Church, which, though it is not identical with the Being of God in Christ, makes Christ luminous within us, and leads us through Him to the Father.<sup>2</sup> Those

<sup>1</sup> Many, especially in the present time, think themselves able to maintain the evangelical principle of faith, which is still dear to them, even when they reject the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity. What we have said is the reason why this is logically impossible, why faith even must be exposed to internal disturbance and turbidity if the eternal basis for the eternal redemption to be found in the Person of Christ (and not in His teaching and example) is not acknowledged to be in the divine Essence itself. The further consequence of this rejection is an increasingly Ebionitic Christology (in relation to Jesus) and—what is simply the reverse of this—a Docetic Christology in reference to the “Christ,”—He is then called the “ideal Christ,” or “the divine principle of Christianity,” or God, or the Holy Spirit.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Thomasius, I. pp. 57, 58; Frank, *System der christl. Gewissheit*, I. p. 303; *System der christl. Wahrheit*, I. §§ 14, etc.

causes of salvation which are given in Christ and the Holy Spirit, faith does not know as mere transient modes of divine Being, but as permanent modes, which are therefore to be based upon the eternal and immutable Being of God. Thus Christian faith bears the traces within itself of a divine Triality. Further, as Nitzsch says,<sup>1</sup> it is no less an inevitable necessity for Biblical Theologians to apprehend the elements of the Doctrine of an essential and immanent Tri-unity in the representations of the Logos, who is with God and is God, in the premundane image and radiance of the Godhead, and in the Spirit who knows the deep things of God. *But since* Christian faith includes the divine Unity as much as a Triality of sources of salvation, it is *faith itself* which constitutes the apparent antinomy in unity and triality, both being presupposed in it, and which is therefore required to solve that antinomy in order that it may not appear to itself contradictory. Even if faith merely sought to lead back the Triality given therein into the divine Unity, this would only be possible in such a way that the Unity is at the same time exhibited as truly presented, and not abbreviated in a Triality, and the Triality, as personal, as willed and established in the Unity, and therefore to be derived from the Unity. And since *common human reason* has an assured knowledge of the Unity, whilst what is peculiarly Christian consists in the Triality which fills out and vitalizes this indeterminate framework, so to speak, of the Unity, the dialogue between Reason and Christianity relatively to the Doctrine of God as the fundamental and supreme problem, will have to consider the solution of this enantiophany. Until the demonstration of the compatibility of distinctions with the divine Unity has been by this means adequately effected, simple faith can live in the meanwhile upon the assurance it *can* be accomplished. But that this assurance can itself only live in a protracted suspense if assertions as to the impossibility of a Tri-unity are not only refuted, but if advances are also made in Christian cognition; and it thence appears in some degree that the Doctrine of the Trinity is again organically incorporated with the *ensemble* of Christian Doctrine, and is acknowledged an important and fruitful factor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nitzsch, *System*, 6th ed. p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> It no less follows from the state of things depicted that all co-operation in



2. AIM.—The knowledge that faith includes traces of a divine Triality, just as faith is faith in the divine Unity, is still insufficient for the scientific verification of the Doctrine of the Trinity. This knowledge, in fact, first gives rise to the *problem* how Triality squares with Unity. In the present state of the Trinitarian question, labour at this problem could only be brought to a satisfactory conclusion if the internal connection were made evident not merely of Christian faith with a Triality, but of the Doctrine of the Trinity with faith at the stage of the Reformation, inherent wherein is the fact that the Doctrine of the Trinity discloses itself on a new side internally homogeneous with the Reformation principle of faith, without displaying a merely loose or casual connection with that principle. Let us reach the conviction that the *evangelical principle of faith* is by no means sure itself apart from the Trinity, that the conscious, new, and godlike personality only finds its objective and absolute foundation in God as the triune, whilst, on the other hand, Triality and Unity do not exclude, but demand each other, and in such a case the evangelical requisites in gnosis will be satisfied on this side. Thereupon it would follow that, as regards the consciousness of evangelical Christendom especially, the Doctrine of the Trinity would adequately prove to be the essence of the Trinity when referred to the principle of faith, and would thus destroy the appearance which the inherited Doctrine of the Trinity presents of serving intellectual interests merely, or of there being a mere loose connection between it and the world, between it and the godlike Christian personality. Our aim must be that the Trinity legitimate itself to believing apprehension as the objective foundation in God of the Christian personality, and especially of that which is peculiarly evangelical. Only thus are the two main sections of Dogmatics reciprocally correlated.

this problem is to be welcomed, at any rate, if it really maintains an economic Trinity. For the latter has not once merely, in the history of the first centuries, led to an immanent Trinity, but is ever the legitimate road thereto. Those who maintain an economic Trinity are to be regarded as entitled to a position in the evangelical churches, because they maintain the *foundation* upon which a superstructure may proceed to be built. To do something towards that superstructure is of more value than to disturb actual fellow-labourers by uncalled-for censures.

That which is characteristic, then, of the evangelical stage of piety is given in the union of the objective (the formal, so called) and the subjective (the material, so called) sides of the evangelical principle, which has permeated the Christian personality and attained realization therein, whilst with this union the pre-Reformation antithesis between authority, law, and necessity on the one hand, and freedom on the other, has attained a fundamental solution. The idea of this personality implies that it is neither identical with mere subjectivity, nor the involuntary, the self-less, reflection of foreign powers or authorities; that it is neither arbitrary nor merely legal, inasmuch as free agency coalesces therein with the morally necessary, and the necessary with the free, forming a vivacious unity; and thus the principle of heathen, i.e. of false, freedom or caprice (of Antinomianism), and the principle of unbelieving Judaism or of false legality, between which the Middle Ages restlessly wavered, are vanquished. But the union of these mighty and world-moving opposites, Authority and Freedom, has only found its *anthropological* expression in immediately religious fashion in Christian personality, in the "freedom of a Christian man;" it has not yet found its *theological* expression, although, nevertheless, the highest quality may be attributed to it, that it is godlike. The proper evangelical union of these opposites must have its eternal necessity in God Himself, nay, must have in Him its eternal archetype and its supreme principle. And since the opposites, the union of which is perfected in the Christian personality, are of an ethical kind, it must follow that the fundamental Reformation knowledge of the Christian personality is to be securely and objectively grounded *theologically* in the *ethical* idea of God, seeing that the necessity of these opposites, like their union, is shown in their absolute verification, i.e. in God Himself in His ethically thought triune Being. Endeavours to apprehend God as triune, even apart from the specifically Christian and the specially evangelical, are not to be supposed to be thus reduced in importance. Rather since, if God is triune, this fact must be made to permeate each of the fundamental definitions of His Being, the so-called physical and logical syntheses of the Triunity are necessitated, and we shall therefore begin with them.

But by these means alone the cohesion of the Doctrine of the Trinity with the evangelical stage of faith, which constitutes a new point of view for the God-consciousness and the world-consciousness, is not as yet completed. And yet such completion must certainly be reached, if the Doctrine of the Trinity is not to remain of subordinate value apparently for the evangelical stage. A loose relation between the two is already precluded by the fact that evangelical faith itself presents a trinitarian problem, as we have just seen. But the syntheses of the Trinity attempted by the Fathers of the fourth century halted at mere physical and logical forms, and cannot therefore suffice for the needs of evangelical faith, which is essentially an ethical matter. We are still in need of such a synthesis of this doctrine as is calculated to demonstrate the ethical Trinity to be the divine foundation of believing Christian personality. It is therefore no contingency, but to be hailed as a very hopeful feature in the Theology of the present day, that its attention is directed more definitely than ever to the apprehension of the *ethical Essence* of God, as is seen also in attempts to construct the Trinity of a most estimable kind (§ 30*b*, end). The truly ethical consists in the union of the truly necessary and the free, and is itself in most intimate connection also with the physical and intellectual. That this is the problem is certain, however remote its solution still is from the goal in view. And we would proceed to our task with the consciousness that hidden treasures are still to be unearthed, to which the Reformation principle points the way as with a finger, nay, the unearthing of which is requisite for its own preservation in purity; nor would we allow ourselves to be affrighted at the appearance of abstractness, which is unavoidable when we are dealing with the pure and ultimate principles which control all else, and which will, after a while, themselves interest us like flesh and blood.

§ 31b. *Continuation.*I.—THE TRINITY OF THE PHYSICAL DEFINITIONS OF THE  
CONCEPT OF GOD.

That God is not a rigid but a living being, and is Life in Himself by the fact that He lives *a se*, has been previously stated (§ 21). He has, and is, not merely life in relation to what is distinct from Himself in which He loses Himself, but prior to everything He is so in and relatively to Himself; He does not even need, as we do, something distinct from Himself for His life, a material or a stimulus.<sup>1</sup> By Himself He is the Life, because He has Aseity in Himself. Julius Müller rightly says:<sup>2</sup> "The idea of Aseity is to be conceived in a manner wholly real and positive, as Self-origination, Self-production, by virtue of which God eternally makes Himself what He is, and not a dead, rigid Being." But if the divine Self-origination is to be thought as real, a distinction, at least a Dyad, is thereby supposed in God; God is the producer absolutely, but what is produced is not primarily the world, but is absolutely equivalent to the producer, an absolute effect which is itself efficient in turn. To this is now to be added that this second efficient cause cannot in its working continue to produce in a similar manner an endless series, a third which produces a fourth, and so on in an interminable theogonic series; that would be the heathen representation; but the unity of the Godhead is only permanently assured, in so far as the living effect or the life effected eternally finds its way back to the first efficient cause, and serves the end of eternally establishing God Himself as effect. God, as *αἰτιατόν*, is referred to God as *αἴτιον*, so that the relation of causation passes over into that of reciprocal action (§ 21). But this

<sup>1</sup> John v. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Lehre von der Sünde*, II. pp. 170, etc., 3d ed. The concept of Aseity is, he says, an indispensable one, the divine Unconditionateness and Independence, not a merely negative idea, as our older Dogmatic Theologians assume. The true meaning of *causa sui* is that God's Essence is His own act, says Müller. Similarly Frank, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, I. p. 111. To assume anything to be without foundation cannot be required of reason.

reference of the effect to the cause only exists by means of the mediation of a *third*, which preserves as well as unites them in diversity. In every living organism there is a reciprocal action, without detriment to the distinction of the members; but this is only possible by the fact that life is not comparable to a straight line, upon which it is always producing something new and different, and is also not a mere movement backwards and forwards between two points, but is a circle which returns into itself;—or by the fact that the relatively independent and severed members are held together by a *principle of unity* which keeps the centrifugal force in equilibrium with the centripetal, a principle which is not one of the two members, nor is it the whole, but which preserves and confirms the members in their distinction, just as it unites them. This principle of union in the organism of the absolute Life we call the Holy Spirit, to whom even a physical importance attaches. He constitutes this organism together with the other two, just as He is Himself conditioned simultaneously with its members. The principle of union presupposes distinctions; but distinctions presuppose in turn the principle of union, for God could not part Himself unless He were sure of the principle of union. Thus Self-origination is possible by means of the mediation of the third: *trinitas dualitatem ad unitatem reducit*. To abide by a duality of principles would not, on the other hand, attain the end of Self-origination, because without a principle which reconducted to unity either the second would produce a third, and the third a fourth, and so on *ad infinitum*, or God would be unable to attain any real causality at all, because when starting from Himself He would not reach Himself again, and thus God would merely remain an absolutely simple, self-identical, rigid substance. These truths are already largely known to the Greek Church. That church has rendered the abiding service that it has surmounted the Sabellian concept of Substance, and the Arianism which thinks God as the mere causality of the world and as in Himself the merely abstractly simple point of identity with Himself, and has won the foundation for the Self-distinction of God, and at the same time for the ontological Trinity, since it has conceived God, of course not without a close investigation and dogmatic establishment

of the third member, to be absolute or self-originating Causality.

## II.—THE LOGICAL TRINITY.

The thought that God is Self-conscious by means of the Son was from the first not remote, since the Son is the Image of the invisible and non-revealing God, or is the Mirror which characteristically presents His Essence (Hypostasis, Heb. i.). However, the Fathers of the fourth century already made attempts to construct a Trinity of this kind. Only the Holy Spirit was not for a long time correlated with the divine Self-consciousness, whilst the Apostle certainly gave a high importance to Him. But more mature consideration teaches that the absolute divine Self-consciousness can only be thought in a trinitarian manner. We found earlier that God is not merely absolute Thought, but also Knowledge (§§ 26, 27). Consequently, we must continue, God is also Knowledge not only of things different from Himself, but of Himself primarily. The absolute energy of His Knowledge must also penetrate His own depths, and indeed in such a way that He does not merely think His thought, but His Being also and His Life, nay, that the whole fulness He has of real forces of life, of beauty, and of harmony, is illuminated by His Self-consciousness. Thus is He ideal, or, in the form of knowledge, master and ruler of all the depth and height, the breadth and length of His Essence. Now to all knowledge there pertains an antithesis of subject and object, of thinker and thought, and only by means of this duality and of their union does knowledge arise. The same thing is true of that knowledge which is self-consciousness. In this case the object is, it is true, no foreign object; but one and the same spirit, that it may become self-conscious, contrasts itself with itself. In this objectivation, the spirit reduplicates itself, so to speak, within itself. In such internal reproduction the absolute Spirit does not primarily project something foreign to itself,—an image of the world, for example, does not project the world-idea (as many recent writers have precipitately supposed that they have even in this idea a transition to the world, at least to the ideal world),—but He projects His own counterpart or

image, to the end that He may comprehend *Himself* therein. But we cannot halt at the duality thus reached. That a new, a third principle is requisite for the divine Self-consciousness to be eternally complete, a glance at the origin of human self-consciousness must convince us. Human self-consciousness does not really take place because the essence of man, which is certainly to be defined from the first as spirit, has, amongst the objects of its consciousness and along with what is distinct and foreign, apprehended itself, has made an object of itself, a circumstance which can only happen by self-objectivation or by diremption into subject and object. On the contrary, so long as there rises before the consciousness of a man, or his intuition, himself indeed, but only as one amongst other objects, so long he has not himself as yet, but speaks of himself as of a third, in the third person, he is estranged from himself, for he has himself, it is true, as an object amongst others, but does not know that he, the thinker himself, is one with the thought, and conversely. He has not looked upon the thinker again as returned so to speak from the depths of the thought, and thus has not yet found himself. And thus he is not yet actual self-conscious spirit, he is not yet I. The spirit of the man is primarily related to itself as a natural object merely. It first generates itself as actual from the fact that it is not merely contrasted with itself as object, but also returns to itself out of self-objectivation, and indeed as thinking and conscious, and that not merely in feeling. These are acts denied to nature, for it lacks the potencies necessary, the factors of godlikeness. If, then, it is undeniable that the spirit does not exist at all as self-consciousness without the third, that which finds itself in thought and thinker, and without the apprehension of the unity of both which is its act, then the faculty of generating itself as actual spirit by the fact that it finds and has itself, or that it becomes self-conscious, or Ego, will have to be described as that whereby the spirit first raises itself above natural existence and becomes actual spirit. Actual spirit is itself this mediation by its own means of thinker and thought not found in nature, which cannot thus enter into itself, because it has not these depths and this perfection of the factors of intelligence, and therefore it cannot return into itself from the diremption which it partly finds in itself. If

an adult falls back to this stage and becomes estranged from himself, he is *mente alienatus*, from which fact the importance as well as the newness of this third factor, of the principle of return to self, which unites the severed members, becomes especially clear. But it thus pertains to the essence of spirit as such that it is its own mediator, that it generates itself as actual spirit, and that apart from such mediation it is not actual spirit, but remains like a child at the commencement of the natural life, in contradiction with its essence as spirit. Thus the absolute Spirit must also be this Self-mediation or ideal Self-reproduction, only that He has His effect ever with Him as eternally happening, and is not to be thought as first becoming in time. In order to embrace everything He is with His Self-consciousness, God makes this everything, *i.e.* Himself, an object to Himself, concentrates all His fulness into an image of Himself, which is a new mode of Being, *i.e.* a mode of Being which would be non-existent but for the Self-diremption, not a mere thought, but a realized thought, in which dwell the essentiality and fulness of the Godhead, and which is an absolute image of the Godhead, in order that He may perceive and know Himself therein. In our self-consciousness, the spirit as it is in itself does not project its own essence perfectly into the objective image of our essence which we portray in ourselves. In the depths of our nature we are a mystery to ourselves; the essence of ourselves which we think, and raise into the light of consciousness, is not our whole essence, and we therefore have only an imperfect self-knowledge; thus the distinction between thinker and thought, the diremption or objectivation, is imperfectly carried out. In God, on the other hand, perfect Self-knowledge is possible, inasmuch as He really and objectively transfuses Himself into His Image. Further, to the fact that God is self-conscious truth or wisdom, the duality of thinker and thought is likewise inadequate; nor does it suffice that the Image, which is not merely a form of thought, but is real, be more than that which is merely thought or posited, namely, self-thinking and self-positing, and does not remain in mere passivity. It cannot suffice that God should simply be the Father's consciousness of the Son, or *vice versa*, and that in both modes of being God should know the second to Himself



merely as a second, and not know Himself in and through the second. In that case there would only be an infinite reflection and re-reflection of the divine Essence on opposite sides. The divine Essence could not know itself in those reflections, because God as thinker would not find Himself again in the thought. The spiritual divine Essence or the Godhead, which actually exists therein in a twofold manner, would remain unrecognised as the common Essence of both. Only by the thinking and determining Godhead, who is in both, knowing His own Essence in what is different to Himself, in what is thought and determined, is Self-consciousness constituted in God. But for that end a third and equally real principle of union is necessary in God, the Holy Spirit, to whom Paul ascribes exclusive dignity in the Self-knowledge of God in His depths.<sup>1</sup> The Third is not the mere sum of the two first forms of Being of the Godhead, is not the divine Essence as such, but one of the modes of the existence of the divine Essence, as the two others also are. This Third is the *principle* of their union by being the power in God, which elevates into consciousness the unity of Essence in the distinctions. It is therefore in its procession logically, although not temporally, conditioned by that duality. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. But even they, we must add, are conditioned by the procession of the Spirit from the common divine Essence, since it secures their return to unity. A third principle might certainly seem to remove us still farther from unity than duality does, but this third does not come to them from without, but emerges from both at the same time, equally confirming their distinctions and leading them back to unity. It presupposes them both; but since both are animated by the impulse of the Godhead to know Himself in what is different to Himself, since both are dominated by the tendency to self-conscious personality, which tendency precedes the whole process, the Godhead in each of the two first forms desires, so to speak, to behold and to lure His innermost Being, indeed, what is peculiarly Himself, from what is different therefrom, in order to know Himself therein. And this eternally takes place by means of the third factor of the absolute divine Spirit, the Principle of Union by virtue of the community of Essence.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.

*Observation.*—Even in human communions two become united by means of a third, in whom they meet with and recognise themselves. Thus the child as a third to father and mother is a point of juncture or a bond for their mutual love.<sup>1</sup> So the third, in which the different members recognise themselves in their unity, is in the State the common love to the Fatherland and its orders, and in the Church the community of origin and history. As far as individuals are concerned, they are certain of their absolute and eternal cohesion, when their glances meet believingly in Christ, and they gain a consciousness of this essential unity or common point of coincidence.

### III.—THE ETHICAL DERIVATION OF THE TRINITY, OR THE ETHICAL TRIUNITY OF THE DIVINE WILL.

*Observation.*—Previous essays at a synthesis of the Trinity from an ethical point of view, namely, from Love as a principle already given, had, as we saw (§ 30b), a tendency to succumb to two manifestly opposite defects. On the one hand, the aid they afforded was too slight for the demonstration of *distinctions* in the modes of the divine Being; for all three distinctions are identically to them merely absolute Love, loving and loved. They teach, on the other hand, a threefold repetition of this self-same Love, which leads to a Triad of three absolute Personalities, who by their love are united into a kind of divine family,—and this tends to Tritheism, and leads to the considering the divine Unity a mere generic concept, beneath which the Hypostases stand as the three individuals which constitute the genus. In that case this Unity, God, can be no longer described as personal. And in that case also the tendency of the Church to think them as distinct and yet so correlated that no one is correctly thought unless the others are thought at the same time,—this tendency does not get its rights, that is to say, they are not thought as correlated ideas. We would not, then, presuppose the divine love to be already given; rather, as a divine Triad lies at the basis of the divine Aseity and the divine Self-consciousness, so would we also seek to apprehend the Triad as the basis for the divine love. If we succeed in apprehending that the concept of love only comes to exist at all by virtue of a Triality of factors, which are distinct and yet eternally correlated, we shall be able to hold ourselves aloof

<sup>1</sup> To which Schöberlein rightly draws attention.

from both the defects we have mentioned. And what is requisite in harmonizing the developed Doctrine of the Trinity with evangelical faith will be best observed, if we allow ourselves to start from the traces of the Trinity given in faith, in order to cognise in the divine Triunity the archetype and principle of the ethical personality of the Christian which is free in God.

We have previously (§ 26) got so far as to think God as the primary ethical Essence, as the primary Goodness, and indeed as the real primary Goodness. But how He was to be thought as ethical, we were not as yet able to establish; rather, an antinomy disclosed itself, which was not to be solved in that place, but concerning which we were led to hope that it would be solved when we apprehended God as the ethical Trinity. For, *on the one hand*, it appeared that the reality which must pertain to God as ethical could not be thought as ethical Being, because it is essential to the ethical that it be the production of volition, nay, that it have its being in volition; a non-volitional ethical being, or one which was not constituted by volition, would merely be an ethical nature, *contradictio in adjecto*. But if we supposed, *on the other hand*, that the goodness in God owes its reality exclusively to free-will, so that a good Being could by no means precede volition, then we had as the absolutely first thing a Will by no means ethically determined, but simply self-constituted. But such an ethically wholly undetermined and unlimited Will would be sheer despotism, sheer arbitrariness, a direct contradiction to the ethical; for the latter cannot owe its existence to chance, which decides contingently (neither in such a way that what is good is willed arbitrarily, nor still less in such a way that, as would be the case here, what is good is decided by chance, by the category of power generally). We should again halt at what was merely physical, since we should not transcend the natural character of the ethical; thus we should again be left in a *contradictio in adjecto*. It would be a mere divine despotism which made good good; with the divine Essence there would be a mere accidental connection.<sup>1</sup> This antinomy was already lighted on by Plato,

<sup>1</sup> Compare on this point what Trendelenburg says in his *Historischen Beiträgen zur Geschichte der Philosophie*, 1855, 2, in the "Essay on Necessity and Freedom in the Greek Philosophy," pp. 113, 126, 133, 135, against the absence of opposi-

when he raised the question, whether good is good because God wills it, or whether it is preferable to say, God wills the good, because it is good?—*i.e.* the question as to how freedom and necessity are related in God?—whether the *goodness of the good* owes its existence to the divine Will, or whether the goodness of God has its reason in the goodness of the extant good which the divine Will determines? Before the advent of Christianity this problem could not be solved, because the view of a higher unity of the ethically free and the ethically necessary, in which both attain their rights, was not given. But even the Middle Ages did not yet possess the conscious knowledge of this higher unity: this unity was rather, although primarily only in anthropological form, the acquisition or the inheritance of the Reformation by virtue of its idea of the new Christian personality, and by virtue of the distinction given therein (and also the union) between authority—*i.e.* the morally necessary—and freedom, between Law and Gospel (§ 31). We therefore find in the Middle Ages this antinomy of Plato's break forth in new and stronger form, and the prodigious influence thereof, or the decision for one of the two sides, presented in the whole common religious life of the Middle Ages, nay, even operative in the beginning of the Reformation.

Duns Scotus (like Bacon and others) holds to the volitional side. He is unwilling to think the internal divine Essence itself ethically determined, but he would have everything placed in the *supremum arbitrium* alone, in God's absolute *voluntas*. This divine *arbitrium* is supposed also to determine what is to be regarded as ethically good for the world of rational beings.<sup>1</sup> God does not command what is good, therefore, because it is good in itself, or because it corresponds with the necessary Essence of God; but everything we call good is only good because God has willed it, because God has ordered it, and because God desires it to be considered good, not because God wills Himself therein as the ethically necessary. If one would judge of the ethical in the sphere of the eternal truths, this view must also be extended by a natural conse-

tion or the pure identity of the divine in itself as related to the ethical antithesis of freedom and necessity.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the article on Duns Scotus in Herzog's *Real-Encycl.* 2d ed. III. pp. 747, 749.

quence to the logical truths, etc. Cartesius says that God is free to make it untrue that the radii of a circle are equal to one another. Bacon thinks Adam's temptation was to seek what was good in itself instead of abiding by an empirical command.<sup>1</sup> The *consequences* of this view, which does not permit anything to be ethically good in itself, but allows what is good and what is bad to be determined solely by the perfection of power and by chance, are very far-reaching. First, man can thus see in good not what is in itself good, but only what is contingently enjoined by perfect divine power; he never attains to the free knowledge of the internal goodness of the ethical, and thus to pure volition of what is good, just because it is good and not the opposite. In this case the motive of acts cannot be the internal goodness of good, but rather considerations which are foreign or contingent to good itself and in itself. For there is in this case really nothing good in itself; its opposite, if God so willed it, might be equally binding. Next, there could be no further talk of an internal necessity for the punishment of evil, any more than for atonement or for the atoner who works salvation; everything must depend upon the contingent use which God wills to make of His perfect power, of His *supremum dominium*, which may even change the law He has already given, as the Scotist *acceptilatio* shows, and as is shown by what is included in the thought of pardon. But if God can declare what He forbids to-day by punishment, to be at another time undeserving of punishment and altogether good, neither in good nor in the repudiation of evil is there any genuine earnestness. There is thus attributed to the Godhead an indifferentism to the distinction between good and evil, Who only really desires reverence for the power of God. But man would thus remain always and necessarily in the last resort arrested at the stage of blind belief in authority, and of the fickleness of fear and hope in the face of power. What man is to regard as good and evil, nay as true, would thus become a mere question as to the positive character of the divine legislation; and the Church, so far as it has a knowledge of what God has ordained, becomes the authority or the conscience of individuals. The whole

<sup>1</sup> Mistrust of constituted authority cannot of course be regarded as endeavour after truth.

moral order thus remains something contingent, nay atomistic, disconnected, without coherence with the logic of the world, with ontology, without coherence even with God as good in Himself, so that ethics and religion have but a loose connection. Finally, if the ethical legislation of God is arbitrary, because what God enjoins is not given with His Essence, but is supposed to merely depend on His Will, there may also be essentially different kinds of good, even within humanity; God may even have left much to the caprice of men; and thus there is room for what is supererogatory, for desert in the narrowest sense of the word. Good is then a plurality of laws, and does not become a unity. These and similar results follow if the free and perfect power of volition is supposed to be that which is supreme and decisive in God, a power which would determine without limit and *exlex* merely what is supposed to be good or evil, in brief, which derives the ethical from the physical.<sup>1</sup>

Conversely, Thomas would teach there is that which is ethically necessary and good in itself; he will not allow what is to be called good or evil to depend upon the divine power of volition or upon chance. There then remains the question, How this good, which is not only constituted by the divine Will, but in willing which God is good, is to be thought as primarily existing? As *Law* or as *Being*?

<sup>1</sup> In the Reformation the Doctrine of Predestination partly coincides with this Scotist error, when it regards the divine Omnipotence (*supremum arbitrium dei*) as the ultimum which conditions everything. Still this is not carried through the orthodox Reformed system, which holds fast to the righteousness of God, to its necessity and goodness in itself. The Arminians have, on the other hand, pushed these consequences in reference to Law, Punishment, and Atonement, as the Socinians have done still more. And this unethical error also shows itself in more recent phenomena, e.g. in England, in Sir William Hamilton and Mansel, who think that at any rate there is no *knowledge* of what is good in itself, but only of what is to be regarded as good, whether in relation to the empirical constitution of man—whilst goodness, nevertheless, must be the norm of what is empirical—or whether from positive divine legislation. Mansel even speaks of a power of God, which He has made use of in Israel, to suspend moral laws. He calls this “moral miracle.” But if there is nothing in itself true or good, the true cannot authenticate itself to man as the true in itself; there is only left blind, slavish obedience to the legal standpoint (Nomianism). If this is applied to Christian faith, it means that faith is based on ignorance of what is in itself true, nay, upon the presumptive impossibility of any such knowledge, that is, is based upon Scepticism (§ 9).

If as *Law*, we have constituted an ethical norm superior to the God who wills, a norm which would rule Him as something alien and subordinate. If now that norm were self-determining and self-controlling relatively to the divine Will, the ethical law superior to God would properly be God. And even if it were said that the *intellectus* of God acknowledges the law of good, but as a something originally extra-divine, which in itself true and good determines of itself Being and Will according to a kind of natural necessity, such a law, which was in itself and without and outside of God true and good, would be inconceivable. Indeed, if the Will of God were still dependent upon it, where amidst such absence of freedom, in which there is no true place for Will, would holy Love remain?

If, on the other hand, the good Being is itself called God, but this good Being is thought as power, which naturally determines the will without an exertion of self, this would again lead to a denial of the fact that there is in God a free determination of the good, or love. And thus again the ethical ideal for man could not be the divine Personality. A God in whom free and holy love has no existence, but only a kind of natural goodness, cannot reveal or implant this free love in us. It would not in that case be repugnant to the idea of man, that (just as God acts according to His nature) man should be determined in a merely natural and magical manner by means of the Church and its sacraments. In this case freedom would be no longer claimed as necessary for the realization of the moral in man.<sup>1</sup> And as the Scotist doctrine leads to a Pelagianism which certainly makes man dependent upon the Church, so the Thomist doctrine leads to a magical grace, whilst in both the true idea of the godlike personality is forfeited; thus the ultimate theological reason of the endless vacillation of the Middle Ages between Pelagianism (or Legality) and Magical Grace lay in the fact

<sup>1</sup> Spinoza likewise changes the divine Will into a mere natural necessity. Even Leibnitz, in his justifiable opposition to Cartesius, approximates too closely to Thomas, for according to him the will is determined in a self-less manner by the divine Nature or *Intellectus*. Comp. my dissertation upon Schelling's *Potenzienlehre* and upon the Mansel-Maurice Controversy in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie*; also Trendelenburg's *Historische Beiträge zur Gesch. der Philosophie*. pp. 347, 331.

that the Doctrine of God of the Middle Ages did not know how to combine the ethically necessary and the free, but each became exclusive of the other, just as the same thing is also seen in the Romanist Doctrine of Salvation, whilst only in the Evangelical form of faith do the necessary and the free, grace and freedom, become united.

Now that God, who is to be thought as the primary Goodness, is therefore both,—the ethically necessary and the ethically free,—and must therefore bear this antithesis within Him, or eternally divide Himself thus, we have already seen (§ 26, end). Those ancient points of controversy as to whether God is good because He wills goodness, or whether goodness is good because God wills it, must be answered in such a way that both sides are acknowledged:—God wills goodness because it is in itself good, and it is good because God wills it. Both aspects are to be supposed in the religious and scientific interest, but both can only be supposed at the same time, if the primary Goodness, which is God, has no mere simple form of being, whether as ethically necessary or as free, but a manifoldly diverse being, absolutely correlated, however, and reciprocally conditioning itself. To show this we must start from the ethically necessary, not from the free. For if, with Duns Scotus, we suppose the first thing in God to be absolutely free will, without a necessity which logically precedes, without a conditioning and defining by means of what is ethically necessary or goodness simply, we could never arrive at an ethical realization or an ethical freedom. For even if goodness were willed, or if something were willed to be good, but in an arbitrary manner, goodness would not be realized. What is good in itself, what is necessary, what is constituted without arbitrariness, must be willed in no arbitrary, but in a free way; only by such means is the ethical realized.

2. If then we must begin with the ethically necessary, we must teach first of all,—that the ethically necessary must have an *existence*, and that *in God Himself*, or rather God must Himself be the ethically necessary or the holy. For (1) the idea of the ethical is not constituted by chance, it is that which is rational and good in itself to which being also attaches (p. 316). (2) But that which is morally necessary cannot be *superior* to God, as a law, power, or fate which is



above Him; but, since it is in itself the highest truth, it falls within the circumference of the divine Being. The ethically necessary has its eternal being so very largely in God, that He is Himself moral Law and morally necessary Being, and thus it is true that all goodness is good because demanded by the idea of God as the ethically necessary Being. Thus primarily God is to be thought the seat, as of the eternal truths generally, so of ethical truth; in Him they have their original being, as that the non-existence of which is not possible (*als das Nicht-nicht-sein-Könnende*). Thus the ethical has primarily such a form in God that He is the holy primary Power, who cannot and will not renounce Himself, but who must be and would be thought to be the holy necessity of the Goodness which is Himself—to be the *δσιον*.<sup>1</sup> This first form of Being in God as the ethical One we call with the New Testament, and in accordance with ecclesiastical custom, the Principle of Fatherhood in God. Through God as Father it is that what is true, necessary, and good in itself has an existence, and that a knowledge of what is true and good in itself is possible. So the Father is thought in Scripture in relation to the world of revelation. In His non-arbitrary but necessarily good Being, Goodness and Holiness are based. The giving of the law in the inward parts of man and on Sinai points back to Him, and according to so many passages of the New Testament the Son sees in Him the ethical *δς* and desires nothing but good, nothing but what He sees in the Father.<sup>2</sup> Sin as caprice, as opposition to the ethically necessary, separates from God the Father; the Redeemer presents Himself as surety to the Father in order to effect the atonement of the world; just as Jesus addresses Him before His surrender to death—holy Father, righteous Father.<sup>3</sup> The God of the Old Testament is pre-eminently the holy God. For the same reason, therefore,—because the ethically necessary must be the decisive thing in reference to the purpose of the world, is it attributed to the Father by means of the conception of the divine *Counsel*.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 321. It is evident from the above why the divine Principle of revelation (the Logos) must primarily reveal the forms of being of the ethical as the "holy."

<sup>2</sup> So already, Luke ii. 49; comp. John viii. 29.

<sup>3</sup> John xvii. 11, 23.

But this ethically necessary Being, or the holy Being, who is God, does not describe the whole ethical God; it is necessary to think a *second mode of divine* Being in relation to the ethical. Were God as ethical a Being merely which He had in no way objectified or would objectify, did He only exist as Himself ethical in a manner irresistible, so to speak, and without His own participation, without freedom, He would be ethical or rather non-ethical Naturalism. The idea of God would swing back to Fatalism. Rather must the Self-production, which already follows from the physical definitions of God as well as from His Self-consciousness, be also thought as *ethical* Self-production. The opposite would be the death of the ethical, as would be very clearly represented to ourselves, if we were to say that God *must* be love according to a physical necessity. Certain therefore as it is that we could by no means arrive at ethical realization apart from an ethical necessity which must fall within the circumference of the divine Being, which must be a form of divine Being, it is also certain that God, since He is Spirit, and since it contradicts His Essence for Him to be merely naturally ethical and holy, does not will to be an ethical Being which exists simply and is immoveably rigid, but He wills to constitute Himself an ethical Being in a living manner; He has therefore in Himself eternally the principle of ethical movement out of Himself, or, as opposed to what is ethically necessary, the principle of freedom as the instrument for His ethical Self-production or Self-realization so as to ensure His absolute ethical Personality and His living Love, for without freedom, without willing out of oneself, love is impossible. This second Principle we call *God the Son*, the mode of the existence of the spiritual God in the form of freedom, just as frequently in the New Testament and in ecclesiastical phrase the Son is the divine Principle of the kingdom of freedom, of historical progress,—the Principle of movement without self-detriment, but of movement on the ground of a *Basis already existent*, so that arbitrariness may ever be remote. For, far removed from a principle of freedom which must tear itself away from the first principle and constitute itself as a totality, a whole of itself, what is free in God is referred back to the ethically necessary as the logical first principle, just as the former is

willed for the latter. This internal connection of the Son with the ethically necessary is expressed in the New Testament in relation to the incarnate Son by *obedience*, which is not, however, that of a servant or of a subordinate, as we equally see, but the obedience of the free son of the house in distinction from the bond son.<sup>1</sup> All coercion therefore is foreign to Him, as contrasted with man, just as all merely sensuous motives are foreign which do not correspond with or originate in what is innermost in Him. Therefore He solicits the love of man, and is able and willing to make those truly free who surrender themselves to Him.<sup>2</sup>

Is then this antithesis of the ethically necessary and the free, which we cannot do without in God if He is to be the primary ethical Being, a contradiction, or is it possible to apprehend how both forms of being coincide in the One God? If we start from Goodness as necessary holy being, which is absolute in dignity and worth, its necessity cannot be blind *ἀνάγκη*, can by no means be ethically blind fate, but the ethically necessary is also simultaneously that which is true, rational, and luminous in itself. Because it (or God in it) maintains the ethically necessary, it is not mechanical coercion, caprice, or *τυραννίς* in spite of its own power. It is not averse to freedom, but the ethically necessary desires its own idea, and much more its apparent opposite, freedom, as the absolute form which is alone adequate or conformable to the ethically necessary. The ethically necessary would have its realization by means of freedom and in it; it is a lover of freedom; and the free thus blossoms out of its apparent opposite. God as the paternal Principle is also not a rigid Law or Being, but is ethical Spirit; there is in Him a will to effect the self-preservation of the ethical as the holy, just as there is a volition of the free, and indeed a necessary volition of the free, as the necessary form for the ethically necessary. But, secondly, as the ethically necessary rejoices in the free, for the sake of which it desires to be, the free, the principle of freedom in God, also strives to get back to the necessary, and desires to condition itself by the necessary. For in itself the free has, it is true, the power to will what it likes.

<sup>1</sup> John xv. 15, xvi. 18, xiv. 17, xv. 26; Rom. v. 17; Matt. xvii. 25, etc.

<sup>2</sup> John viii. 32.

But if it renounces the ethically necessary, it cannot maintain itself, because it comes into contradiction with what is true and good in itself, which as such is at the same time what is rational and logical, and would thus become sheer caprice. But this free principle, of which we are speaking, is divine, being constituted the second mode of existence of the God-head, and cannot fall outside of the divine sphere, because in its foundation it coincides with the same divine Being, who also presents and is the ethically necessary. Thus we see from both sides that the ethically necessary and the free are not exclusive, that they form no contradiction, but that there is a possibility of their union. The realization of this unity will become clear from the following considerations. If the Son with His will had recourse to the ethically necessary or the good, but only as if to another volition, or as if to a mere law which was imposed upon Him by what was ethically necessary, He would be, although freely, still in a kind of foreign element which was made for Him. The free must be able to know and to will in the ethically necessary also that which is good in itself, and thus what is true in *its own* essence, otherwise the good is to it merely a second thing to which the free submits, although willingly. But this would be a false Subordinationism. Many now halt here, but a true Trinity cannot arise unless all the members are coequal as well as correlated. If the Son willed indeed the ethically necessary of the Father, but did not perceive therein Himself, His own truth, the truth of the free, because the ethically necessary is the rational, He would recede from co-ordination back into the position of creaturely obedience. Even in us the divine likeness is not yet realized, so long as we have conscience indeed, and thus somehow consciousness of the ethically necessary and the good, but still not the consciousness of the good as good, as that which is given with reason, and thus even with our own true essence; but it is only realized when freedom sees and wills in the apparent opposite to itself, in immoveable law the truth of what is peculiarly rational, when freedom has found itself again in that law, and in defiance of the existence of conscience is not without a legislation of its own and a free apprehension.

As then the absolute unity of the necessary and the free, by means of which man is raised according to the standpoint

of the Reformation above caprice and above the standpoint of mere legality, is only completed by the agency of the Holy Spirit in the inward parts, so also in God this union is only perfected by the agency of the *third Principle*; one and the same Principle, namely, the Holy Spirit, originally and archetypically combines in God the ethically necessary and the free, and consummates the same union as a kind of copy in man, the image of God. It is the Holy Spirit who rules in the deep things of God in an ethical manner as well as a cognitive (1 Cor. ii.), and by whose agency God as the Son beholds and finds in the Essence, or in the depths of the ethically necessary of the Father, the volition of the being of the free, therefore the free, *i.e.* Himself; and by whose agency, conversely, God as the Father in the free finds and beholds the ethically necessary as freely willed contents, that is, finds and beholds Himself. In the depths of both divine Principles, of God as Father and as Son, is one and the self-same divine *οὐσία*, which is dedicated to the ethical, which wills the divine distinctions in reference to the ethical, and which, by the agency of the third Principle, the Holy Spirit, is eternally re-conducted to the day of the divine Consciousness and to that of the divine Will, in order that both may know themselves in their unity. Thus by the agency of the Holy Spirit as the bond of unity the self-knowledge and the self-volition of the free is eternally effected in the necessary, and that of the necessary in the free, that is to say, *absolute*, self-conscious, free Love is effected. For love is the unity of ethical necessity and freedom, because it wills the ethically necessary as such, that is, with consciousness and absolute desire.<sup>1</sup> Love is the truth of the Spirit; formally, because it is the absolute unity of the divine Intelligence and the divine Volition; and as regards contents, because the absolutely worthy, goodness, is brought therein to eternally living realization.

The ontology or metaphysics of love thus depicted forms the conclusion of the process by which God is *eternally absolute Personality*.<sup>2</sup> The importance of this concept, which is related

<sup>1</sup> With especial clearness Liebner recognises in love the unity of the morally free and the morally necessary.

<sup>2</sup> With all precision Frank, *System der christl. Wahrheit*, also sees in the Trinity the eternal process of the divine Personality.

to the divine Intelligence as well as the divine Will, calls for a more minute consideration on both sides.

3. GOD IS ABSOLUTE PERSONALITY, inasmuch as He is the unity of absolute Self-consciousness and absolute Self-determination. The divine Knowledge would be an imperfect knowledge if God knew everything but Himself, or if He came into His consciousness as everything else does, whilst in the object of His consciousness, that is, in Himself, He did not know and perceive Himself. His will would not be truly free, if in absolute good He did not will and know Himself. But if we are to teach that in the totality of His internal definitions He is the absolute object of His consciousness and of His will which is directed to itself and master of itself, the statement is thereby made of what is conveyed by the expression "absolute personality," which is not to be surrendered because of possible misunderstandings.

But objections always arise against the application of this concept to God. Many think that, as regards the absolute contents, the universal Principles of Being, this form is too narrow, that God would by such a phrase be limited and finite by contrast with what is distinct from Him. Thus it is said Personality, by which it is yet wished to give expression to a divine excellence, is rather a limitation or deprivation of His Absoluteness; therefore God is not indeed to be thought sub-personal, but also not personal. He is supra-personal, and so far impersonal. Both Fichte and Hegel found in the idea a finitizing element, and the former therefore halted at a moral order of the world, yet not without seeing himself compelled to pass over from the *ordo ordinatus* to an *ordo ordinans*, which, if thought to be real moral force, will lead back again to the absolute Spirit who knows and wills Himself as the primary Good. To Hegel God is the *Weltgeist*, to which he does not think it possible to ascribe Personality, because it would thus be an individual and finite essence; he therefore simply attributes to it an eternal process of subjectivation in finite spirits; it is thus the principle of endless and eternal self-finitizing, which is to him the form for the realization of its infinity. To the "Pantheism of Evolution" it is rightly objected<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* comp. Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*, 1878, pp. 403, 413-418.

that human (finite) thought cannot possibly be one with the Absolute, that dependence and imperfection are not to be got rid of, and that accordingly God would never come to absolute realization as the absolute Spirit if He only had His reality in finite spirits, and were not in Himself also absolute Self-consciousness and Self-determination.—A less important objection is, that self-consciousness, and thus personality, only takes place by a repellent influence exercised by something else, against which the spirit asserts itself, and that self-consciousness thus presupposes a second and finite being and its influence upon the passive spirit, both being excluded, it is said, by the idea of God. But self-consciousness is not produced, although it is stimulated, from without; it is rather the original act of God Himself. Yet how in the conscious positing of Himself which is always active, not passive, and which declares a Self-possession and a Self-mastery, there is supposed to lie a deficiency as regards God or something unworthy God, is not evident. By this fact there is indeed a very positive statement made that God is absolute Spirit, who exists of and for itself, and is in possession of itself. So little does the world-consciousness (the *Thou*) produce in us our self-consciousness (the *I*), that it rather happens that only after the spirit has distinguished itself from itself can it consciously distinguish itself from that which is different.<sup>1</sup>—Schleiermacher says that quite unavoidably the pious man mentally represents God to himself in the moment of devotion as personal. But God is thus, he thinks, thought to be limited, to be forced into contradiction, seeing that He can only be contrasted with the world or the pious worshipper as a person or as a *Thou*, if the world is a boundary to Him.<sup>2</sup> He is correct in saying that the world

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, III. pp. 565, etc.; Pfeiderer, *Wesen der Religion*, p. 104. Pfeiderer quotes (*Religionsphilosophie*, p. 418) the words of Thomas, *Summa*, I. 19, 2: *Deus alia a se intelligit intelligendo essentiam suam* (which still does not mean to say that the contents of the divine Consciousness is merely the world-consciousness).

<sup>2</sup> Schleiermacher, *Reden über die Religion*. On the other side, *Dialektik*, p. 422, Spinoza's formula of *natura naturans* is, he says, physical, and therefore "hypophilosophical;" p. 156, "God's idea is in Himself;" *Philos. Ethik*, A. v. Schweizer, p. 16, "The Absolute is subject-object, because neither as knowledge has it being, nor as being has it knowledge outside of itself."

(or the Ego) cannot be originally opposed to God, which would be dualistic, and that originally God alone is Being and all Being. But a control of the possibilities of such things as He is not, is not thereby precluded, nor is a control of the realization of these possibilities by His own agency without a limitation thereby arising relatively to Him. If, as primary Being, God is also the Principle of all realities, or the real and perpetual basis of their possibility, nothing can exclude Him from itself, because He conceives and embraces everything in Himself dynamically. Such an infinity God has not, nor must He will, that He should as it were fill all space with His Being, and leave no room for anything *præter se*, thus tolerating nothing beside Himself, and precluding everything possible from any being whatever, not from absolute aseity merely. Rather can God know and will a world distinct from Himself without being limited thereby.—The objection of Origen, that, if God formed a conception of Himself, He could no longer be thought as infinite, has been already met (p. 324). God's infinity is not indefinity, logical boundlessness. Rather, because God is something very definite, nay, the most definite Being of all, He can also be comprehended by His intellect and will, which are adequate and equal to the divine contents.—Yet again *others* say that, however it be with the objective Essence of God, the form of our thought is at all events too narrow to embrace the divine Infinitude; especially can God not be thought by us as personal. Our thought being bound up with the forms of sensuous perception, and thus with finitude, cannot but finitize God, it is objected,<sup>1</sup> in thinking of Him as personal, *i.e.* cannot but annul His Essence. But this objection contains an internal contradiction. If the meaning is that every definite idea must finitize God, there lies in the very objection itself a knowledge of the divine Infinitude, and thus of a definiteness of God. And if it is answered that the certainty of this Infinitude is only a matter of feeling, it is nevertheless conceded that our spirit has access to the infinite on one side, and, conversely, the infinite has access to the spirit. But it is an arbitrary supposition that our spiritual being is radically constituted in an unharmonious manner,

<sup>1</sup> Thus in the *Dogmatik* of Lipsius, § 257, and often, after Jacobi, p. 194. For a pertinent reply, see Pfeiderer, 1878, pp. 416, 417.



and is especially fitted to conceive the knowledge, which is never absent even in feeling, to be finite simply. It has been pertinently remarked, as against this point of view, that it confounds mental representation and thought. We can think many things of which we are unable to make to ourselves visible and exhaustive representations. The reply is also to be made that definition (*determinatio*) is not to be identified with limitation (*negatio*).—Finally,—and this is possibly the most important objection advanced, whilst the question is brought to the point of decision,—it is asserted that personality would make God an individual or a single being, although He would be at the head of the first class in the series of the particular and finite (see p. 319); whereas He really is the all-embracing universal,<sup>1</sup> the totality or the whole, to whom the individual, and persons especially, are simply related as parts. But apart from the application of the inadequate category of Quantity to the Godhead, by which we should certainly arrive at a mere gradational difference or a difference of degree between God and man, the answer is to be returned,—that the idea of the Absolute is not analogous to finite individuals, because God alone has Aseity, and is the basis of fact for the universe. But just for that very reason God is not the universal Being in the sense that He is everything that is particular or its sum. Nor is He possibly the realistic generic concept represented by the mind for all particular being. But He is the universal Being, the primary Essence, the primary Spirit, in the sense that, as He alone must be originally thought logically as Being, He is also the universal ground of the possibility of everything He is not, and of everything which can only owe its realization to *His self-conscious Will*. If it is not granted that this must logically precede the realization of the world, nay, if the mediating member of the Self-consciousness and the Self-determination of the personal God, which have as their contents the divine Absoluteness with all its definitions, is passed over, and the world is arrived at by supposing God's distinction of Himself from Himself to be identical with the "fundamental being of what is distinct from Himself, the finite, the world," then the idea of the world is not derived,

<sup>1</sup> Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, p. 414.

but is obtained surreptitiously, and the world is constituted the contents of the divine Self-consciousness in a purely empirical manner. But since the world of the finite is not perfect nor absolute, the contents of the divine Self-consciousness would not be absolute. For then either God would not be absolute, or at least He would not know Himself to be so. Without prematurely introducing the world, we shall therefore by preference abide by the conclusion, that before all things God knows and wills Himself in the Absoluteness of all His definitions by being in Himself triune, by being Self-originating, by having Aseity as well in His Being as in His Knowledge and ethical Volition. The completion of the concept of God by definitions (*determinatio*) must not be finiteness either as regards the divine Knowledge or Volition; but God is Himself in His Absoluteness primarily His own contents. Absoluteness is not a form merely which comprehends everything finite, but a fulness which is master and conscious of itself. God is certainly in this way distinguished from all that is possible and actual which is not Himself, and He is not limited by such distinction as has been previously shown. God is a peculiar, that is an unique, concept, a Being distinct from all else. But His peculiarity in the ultimate resort just consists in His having as triune that threefold Aseity which so little confines Him within limits that He rather becomes thereby in Himself the *universal Principle* of Truth, Knowledge, and Being; for there is no knowledge without the eternal and universally binding truths which have their original seat in God, and God is the universal ground of the possibility of everything outside of Himself. Thus the two things which are equally necessary find their suitable union; the concept of God is a particular and definite concept, and it has an essentially universal reference.

We shall find the same thing if we turn to the side of the divine *Will* and ask, What are the contents of the divine Love? The reply must be: God, who is Love by means of the three trinitarian Principles, necessarily loves Himself primarily. The primary Love loves the primary Goodness, which is God Himself, and thus the factors also by means of which God is eternally absolute Love; and what has been previously described is nothing but the process of the divine Self-love,

which embraces all divine perfections. But here similar considerations open to those which have just been mentioned. For Self-love, even if it is not confused with Egoism, as Sartorius wrongly does, may yet seem, since God is of course the Being most deserving of love, to make God an individual, and to enter into a transcendence which would cut off the advance from God to the world, or would make that advance contingent, and which would at all events leave that advance the mere position of a self-less means for God, whilst necessarily robbing it of the importance of being an end. God's Self-preservation would, it is true, be secured, but God by His absolute Self-love would be enclosed, so to speak, in His own Exaltation, and would thus again become a single Being instead of the universal Principle, His love again lacking perfection, namely, communicability. But we shall not do justice to what is true in this objection if we again allow the divine Self-love we have already won to fall, in order to press forward to the real world. Justice will only be done by thinking out what we have won to its ultimate conclusions. The divine Self-love comprehends, it is true, everything in God in just Self-preservation, but it is an ethical Self-love, and this by no means limits God to Himself, by no means keeps Him enclosed by His Transcendence, but is perfectly compatible with the tendency to Self-communication, to Immanence in another. For since God loves Himself, He loves goodness as such or generally; He is *Amor Amoris*; He loves it therefore, not merely as it is in Himself, in His own Personality as distinguished from everything else whether possible or actual, but He rejoices in a life of love as such, i.e. He loves His goodness in itself *with a universal love*. Goodness in itself as such is not particular, but its desire is to be and dwell everywhere, where there is a possible abode for it, and therefore to be efficient. God as holy Love, and therefore Self-willing and Self-loving, desires Himself also to be communicable transeunt love, and with the volition of His Self-preservation (as the universal Goodness) there is also supposed the volition of His communicability. Therefore, although He is transcendent by virtue of His relation to Himself in ethical Self-preservation, He is nevertheless, if there exists anything distinct from Himself, able to exist in that distinct thing. And, conversely, His Transcendence and

Self-preservation is the necessary postulate of His Self-communication and Immanence in the world. For only because God has absolute Self-possession by means of His perfect Self-consciousness and His Self-love, is He master of Himself, and certain that in His Self-communication He will not, as all pantheistic systems think, lose Himself in what is different to Himself. Did He lose Himself in what is devoid of self, such Self-communication would not for a moment be any longer love, but a physical effusion of Himself. The possibility of self-retention, a form of freedom, first gives to love its ethical value. But *such love*—which unites the ethically necessary and the free, and which is self-love in such a way that God in Himself loves the good generally, and can thus be the will to communicate to another—is absolutely the highest thing conceivable; as, compared with all other forms of being, it is absolutely unique by its union of the highest opposites, which find in it absolute accomplishment. Love is an unique power, a force of high, nay of the highest order, since it perfectly combines the faculty of relation to self with the faculty of relation to others, a power *sui generis*, inasmuch as it combines the factors of being, which otherwise remain altogether external to each other. And for this reason it can do what no other power can. It transcends opposites by uniting them, for the power of the whole is in it. But it is a whole solely because it concentrates in itself all modes of being of the ethically good. Therein only is the perfect ethical concept of God won. We have arrived at it because we have not halted at the metaphysics of the divine Self-consciousness, but have also considered the metaphysics of the ethical Essence of God, because we have analyzed the holy Love, which is primarily Self-love, but which in the love of Self loves Goodness also, universal goodness, and already shows in Self-love the internal tendency to communicative love. Only in the Trinity ethically thought can the Christian form of the doctrine of the Trinity complete itself, and even the godlike, Christian personality attain its absolute theological verification.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In exact speech, distinction is to be accurately made between Individual, Subject, and Personality. We do not call God an *Individual*, although He is an indivisible unity; for an individual is embraced in a genus. An individual may also be lifeless, and such as does not reflect at all upon itself. But we do

4. THE POSITIONS ALREADY WON, HOWEVER SIMPLE, HAVE A VERY WIDE BEARING AND GREAT FRUITFULNESS.—First of all, then, the group of objective doctrines may harmoniously coalesce into one with the Protestant principle, for their internal homogeneity has now disclosed itself. To speak particularly, does the Trinity coincide with the question whether there is anything true in itself, and whether a cognition of truth as such is possible for us? The question is to be answered in the affirmative, if we are destined to be the image of God, and if God is the seat of an eternal divine power which is not supposititious or of eternal truths independent of caprice, especially therefore the seat of what is ethically necessary. If this is to be negatived, instead of the cognition of truth as such, there would only be a cognition of what is empirical, and everything would rest upon chance or caprice. And the Trinity coincides, again to be particular, with *the great problem of Freedom and Necessity*. It includes this, that these opposites are inextinguishable in God, but are so contained in

not even call God a *Subject*; for although as absolute Subject He might, it is true, be thought to be passively related to Himself, and His Self-preservation might thus come to be expressed, still of itself this might be the mere Deity of Deism, and the communicability be wanting, which, since God is the absolutely ethical Ego, is so combined with His Self-preservation that the latter does not merely embrace the volition of the good in and for itself, but also the willing of the same as of that which is in itself and universally good, which He also desires to grant to others. But such good pertains to *Personality* alone, as ethical. In it the spirit of the universal rules, the spirit of love and the spirit of truth. Personality also includes as elements what is essential in the concept of the individual—namely, the distinctiveness of separate existence, and the essential thing in subjectivity—self-reflection. But its peculiarity or uniqueness consists, as has been said, in its aseity, by which it is straightway fitted to be the universal principle; its passive relation to itself is not immediately, it is true, in relation to something else, to the world: for in that case the contents of the divine Self-consciousness would only be the world, God would only know and will Himself as the world; neither does it exclude a second thing at the outset, inasmuch as God sees in the Self, upon which He reflects, the ground of the possibility of something different. The universal is supposed together with the ethical personality, which is neither limited within, for the spirit of the universal rules it, nor does it suffer any limitation from without, which it does not itself impose. It is the power to retain self in another, and even to be self-existent in another. For this is the method or art of love. If therefore there are other spirits besides God, He is, of course, a separate personality by the side of and without them; but neither co-ordinate with them, nor divorced from them, nor limited by them, for He is the Personality, which is as Aseity equally the universal and real ground of possibility, and in this sense the central Personality.

Him that in Him their archetypal union is given. And as the Trinity is most intimately connected with theoretical questions, so the Trinity, when developed on the ethical side, shows the most intimate connection with the most important practical questions also, when these are pursued to their root, namely, to the *relation of the ethical to religion*. In the willing of Himself in God, who is the primary ethical Being, religion and morals (self-volition in its truth) find their union. What else is the godlike personality of the sons of God but the conscious union of the free with the ethically necessary as the absolutely worthy and deserving of love? The necessity of the *ethical* for religion is theologically verified by the fact that God, the ethically necessary, is according to His Essence content with nothing less than self-conscious and free desire after the good, and that He straightway requires the form of this freedom as the only worthy means of the realization of the good. Thus all Nomianism is subdued at the lowest roots, and is recognised as a mere intermediary stage, which still lacks the experience of the Holy Spirit. As God is in Himself, so He also reveals Himself, and does not deny the perfection of the process which is aimed at, and which is a portrayal of Himself by the mediation of the Holy Spirit. No less is the necessity of *religion* for the ethical verified. If, that is to say, the absolutely ethical is identical with God Himself, there can be no true morals, no true surrender to the ethical, which is not—though unconsciously—a surrender to God, and therefore religious. And if it is recognised in the archetype of the good, in God, that freedom has to see in the ethically necessary not a check, not a foreign and inimical power, but the true vital element of its own being, Antinomianism and its caprice are shown to be irrational, and the *flight* from God as the ethically necessary to apparent freedom to be *folly*, because flight is from that as the death of freedom which is its only security against despoiling, and is its life. Since, then, in the latter Antinomianism and in the former Nomianism a return of the heathen and Jewish principles is to be seen, we know that the ethical trinitarian concept of God vanquishes the false fundamental principles of Ethics, and secures theologically the archetype for God-likeness. Finally, if it is necessary to suppose in God these distinct

and yet absolutely combined factors or modes of being of the ethical, in order that God may be actually thought as primary Goodness, not merely are the *deistic and pantheistic* concepts of God, as they are incompatible with conscience and knowledge, proved to be repudiated as on the final appeal, but they are even positively transcended. Since the ethically necessary and the ethically free, far removed from being exclusive, confirm and demand one another, and since holy love is the union of this double form of the one primary good Being, all non-Christian ideas of God of a one-sided Transcendence and Immanence are definitively surmounted, and God can be thought neither as fate nor mere law, neither as absolute indifference nor as caprice and as in Himself mutable. Deism emphasizes by its incommunicable God the divine Exaltation, the divine Self-preservation, which stands estranged and cold over against the world; Pantheism emphasizes the process of living divine Self-communication in the world, but its God loses Himself therein. Both, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> develop into contradictions. They are positively transcended by the trinitarian apprehension of the ethical Being, that is to say, of Love, which desires itself as necessary and as free, that is, which even in Self-love wills love, and even in Self-communication has and wills itself, and in both is *amor amoris*. Sublimity and humility, says Franz von Baader, are wondrously united in love. The former is Transcendence, and it remains even in Exaltation communicative and does not divide; the latter is the principle of Immanence, which even in participation with and condescension to what is beneath remains holy and exalted.

§ 32.—*The Absolute Personality in its relation to the Divine Hypostases and Attributes.*<sup>2</sup>

Since the absolute Personality is the *eternally present* result in the trinitarian process of the Life and Spirit of God, the Self-conscious, Self-willing, and Self-possessing God is also present in each of the divine distinctions in such a

<sup>1</sup> § 27, 7; § 26, 2.

<sup>2</sup> § 26, 3; § 27, 6.

way that, though they are not of themselves and singly personal, they have a share in the One Divine Personality, in their own manner. But as the absolute divine Personality is the combination into one of the three modes of the divine existence which participate therein, and has its existence in them as they have in it, so the same divine Personality, which in the ultimate reference is according to its essence holy Love, is also the unification and the *supreme power of all the divine attributes*. God, as personal holy Love, is the personal primary Spirit, in whom are indissolubly united Wisdom, Freedom, Blessedness. But all the other definitions of the concept of God studied earlier in our investigation have their source in the divine Love, which is the medium of their participation in the spirituality of the divine Essence, the norm and the teleological principle of their activity.

1. In what precedes, the eternal trinitarian process has been so considered that the absolute divine Personality is the result of its three principles or factors. And thus no one of these principles has of itself a claim to the Personality, which is rather their result, and that as surely as God is only manifest to Himself, or Self-conscious and Self-determining, *by means of* the internal Trinity. But so certainly as Monotheism requires the absolute Personality to be one, and the one God to be no impersonal neuter,<sup>1</sup> but *Deus*, and so certainly as every form of Triality in the Persons and Hypostases in the sense of three individuals of a genus or three subjects<sup>2</sup> or spirits, every form which leads to Tritheism, is exceptionable, we can as little abide by the results already obtained. Because of the Christian consciousness (§ 31, 2), and in accordance with Scripture, it is requisite to know that these three modes of the divine Being do not become extinct in their product, the divine Personality, but that they eternally endure, in such a

<sup>1</sup> Athanasian Creed: *Non tres aeterni,—increated,—immensi,—omnipotentes, non tres Dii, sed unus est Deus—non tres Domini, sed unus est Dominus.*

<sup>2</sup> Anselm of Canterbury, *Monologium*, cap. 37, etc. Comp. Ueberweg, *Grundriss der Gesch. d. Philos.* 3d ed. 1867, II. p. 128.



way indeed that God can reveal Himself in the world according to each of the three modes of Being, and that in each of them God knows Himself and wills Himself according to its distinction from the other modes, that in each of them He exists as a person and not merely as a power. The eternal result of the trinitarian process is the eternal presence of the divine Personality in different modes of Being. The ecclesiastical doctrine of the *περιχώρησις* also leads to the same truth, with which doctrine the trinitarian concept of God alone agrees, and by which the divine unity as opposed both to tritheistic representations of the persons and to self-exclusive wholes is secured, whilst the distinctions are eternally ratified. No one of the modes of the divine existence is found without the others. In each there is in its own way the whole Godhead. Thus, according to Scripture, He who was born in the bosom of the Father is the premundane image of the invisible God,<sup>1</sup> and the Spirit of God is in God;<sup>2</sup> so Father and Spirit are present in Christ, in whom the Logos became flesh.<sup>3</sup> Consequently God is to be thought as personally present in Christ according to the Scriptures, God knows and wills Himself in Him, although it is not God generally but God as the Logos who has become man. That the absolute Personality, the result of the process of the three Hypostases, must be retrospectively of importance for the latter, is especially seen from the following consideration. It is *never* produced for the first time by the process, so to speak. It is the eternal result; it does not succeed in time the three principles in God, but like them is eternal. And being existent, it will produce them. Indeed, the co-operation of the eternally present Personality of God is necessary to the process, which eternally renews its Self-production. The divine Unity eternally posits Himself in a threefold manner for the purpose of this eternally living Self-production. Did the Personality not thus eternally exist as the eternally renewing production of this Personality, this production would itself have to be thought unconscious and unspiritual, a *γέννησις ἐκ νυκτός*, which even Aristotle repudiates with respect to God. Therefore God is to be thought conscious

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 15, etc.; John i. 18.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.<sup>3</sup> John xiv. 9, 10, i. 27, etc., xvii. 11, 21, x. 30.

and personal in the eternal activity of the reproduction of His Personality. He is personal in the three Hypostases, as He is personal by their means.

2. The constitution of the divine Life is an organism ever producing itself by means of the trinitarian members, and subsisting by their reciprocal conditioning. Its unity and eternal result is the absolute Personality. But on the other hand, this result is eternally present, and therefore also co-operative in the Self-production. How do these two statements coincide? Just as in every organism we know the single members serve for the production or reproduction of the whole, and that the complementary mode of consideration is no less necessary, according to which the whole, the organism, which enters as result, precedes the parts, or according to which what is contrived and reproduced by the members, in turn conditions, forms, contains the members, lives within them as the power of the whole and gives each its parts, so is it also here. The ever present result precedes the eternal process of renewal, co-operates and lives in the function of the single members as the power of the whole which makes those functions possible. Nor do we thus arrive at regarding each of the trinitarian factors like this whole as of itself identical with the whole personal God, who is therein, for only the three together are the One true God, the one absolute Personality. Nor do we thus regard three separate Personalities as possibly present therein, or that there is a triple repetition of the one and whole God. We only show that the distinctions are permanently ratified by the divine Personality, and that the latter is in them all, only in each of the Hypostases in a different manner corresponding with its idea. If the teachers of the Church already affirmed a *περιχώρησις* of the divine distinctions into one another, this is to be completed (since the divine Personality is not a fourth to the three, but only exists by their means and their eternal union) by supposing an Immanence of this Personality in each of the distinctions. Indeed, the Immanence of the distinction in one another is brought about by the fact that the *one* divine Personality eternally participates in a living manner in each of the members, and by the fact that the one personal God is in the other Hypostases,

and thus in each of the members, and He integrates each according to its manner with the Spirit of the whole, or with Personality. Thus the absolute divine Personality is, knows, wills Himself, without detriment to His unity, in each of the three Hypostases, and thus threefold or in a threefold manner, and, conversely, each of the three Hypostases or modes of Being has its share in the divine Personality, just as the latter is brought about by them. Thus God knows and wills Himself in each of the three modes of existence which as God He eternally assumes, but never in isolation from the others. We saw before (§ 31a), that even in our self-consciousness the thinking Ego seeks to objectify itself in what it thinks, to consciously take itself back into itself, but that this self-objectivation does not in us attain to full completion, and thus we merely have an incomplete self-knowledge. The Self-objectivation in God is absolutely perfect. Hence the distinctions become more profound than in us, and yet the union of them becomes an absolutely intimate one, and this is especially shown in the *περιχώρησις*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In every living organism there is the soul of the whole omnipresent and operative in every member, and yet in each after its own manner. Thus, if one member suffers, the whole organism is more or less one for the one member. Where there is only an inarticulate continuity or similarity of parts, there is there straightway wanting the perfect unity of the whole. Mere similarity forms no perfect bond of unity. The unity which a mineral forms by the mere identity or similarity of its material, is a simply external and no true unity, because one part is equivalent to the rest, and because the unity has no distinct parts or members which it takes into itself and produces. A higher unity is only possible when the one differentiates itself and becomes articulate, and is seen most perfectly in correlates, which have stripped off everything adventitious in themselves and are absolutely connected and necessary. Where the members belong so intimately to the whole, are so taken into the whole, so to speak, and held together by it, that no one whatever can be taken away or thought without *essential* injury to all, then only is there true, living, and spiritual unity. Then the unity is one that has been brought about. And as it makes all the members essential points of action by which it is itself induced, it is present in them all in such a way that the whole enters into and lives for each individual. Thus there is no longer anything adventitious or dead in the organism, and the unity is one present and complete of its kind. Each of the members is merely a separate mode of existence of the *life of the whole*, which moves within the organism, is ever conditioned or produced by the other members, and is the force or soul of the whole. And, conversely, each of the single members is an *individual point of unity*, which serves the whole as its end, and the self-preservation of the whole as well as of the members as necessary means. If this whole is already regarded as belonging to the category of life,

3. The exposition now given combines the most conspicuous representations of the Doctrine of the Trinity which have appeared, and arranges their elements of truth in appropriate order, especially those representations which date their origin to the creative period of the dogma.<sup>1</sup> Some, as Athanasius, Hilary, and partly Augustine, allow the One divine collective Consciousness to result from the three Hypostases, by which means they already begin to apply the eternal Self-origination of God, the diremption into *αἰτιον* and *αἰτιατόν*, in a trinitarian manner. Others, as Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa, conversely, allow the one common divine Essence (or, as we should say, the one absolute Personality) to know and will Himself after a threefold diverse manner in the Hypostases. If both views are united, the confirmation and eternal persistence of the distinctions follow by means of the divine Unity. Further, inasmuch as the three *centra* or self-conscious centres are established by means of the one eternally self-producing divine Personality, this may satisfy as far as is possible the

it finds its fullest application in the sphere of spirit, in which distinctions enter more purely and precisely, and at the same time the unity can become more intimate. Particularly is each of the Members of the Trinity an individual point of unity (*focus* or *centrum*) for the physical, logical, and ethical attributes of God generally. If we regard these relative *centra* as the points of production of the one absolute Personality, they, so to speak, present points of passage merely, surmounted by the process of the divine Life. But they do not cease in their result, because the divine Personality as eternally living can only originate or reproduce itself by their means, and the present soul of the whole is so to speak in them. They are not merely *partes*, for they are modes of existence of the One divine Essence, who knows and wills Himself as Ego by their means, although in a different way in each; therefore we pray to God in all three Hypostases. These different modes of being, as they are in God, will also enter into revelation, according to the order which the wisdom of the divine Love determines.

<sup>1</sup> This exposition agrees most with Martensen, and partly also with Liebner; further, with Frank, §§ 14-16. The latter says: "The absolute Personality of God is as such triune, and the triune God is as such the absolute Personality. The threefold positing of the Ego is the threefold Self-positing of the One absolutely personal God, because of that positing of the Ego. God as the absolute Personality, and thus triune, is in Himself the absolute Goodness and the absolute Love." Frank manifestly does not understand "Ego" to be identical with Personality. Thomasius, on the other hand, altogether abandons the road of the fundamental ecclesiastical conceptions. The *distinctions* in God he does not take to be correlates, i.e. he does not so understand them that none of the Hypostases can be thought without the others; but he already supposes the Father to be the absolute Personality in so far as the others are constituted as equally eternally divine Personalities by His Will or His Self-determination. On the

view of Gregory Nazienzen, who was pre-eminently able to ascribe a separate existence to the Three, seeing that he compares them to three connected suns, although he certainly makes no provision in such a comparison for the divine Unity.<sup>1</sup>

If now the three modes of existence of the through and through personal God are supposed to be always coexistent as correlates, then in every mode of the existence of the Godhead we may fix upon, the whole Godhead, and thus the absolute Personality, is present and efficient by means of the others to be supposed at the same time. Thence it does not follow that God cannot reveal Himself to us otherwise than as all His three Hypostases at the same time, or than the absolute Personality. Only this follows, that in the revelation of each of the Modes of the divine existence the one absolute Personality is present and efficient. The revelations themselves cannot be distinguished from one another in a manner analogous to the immanent divine distinctions.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. RETROSPECT FROM THE IDEA OF THE PERSONAL TRIUNE

contrary, the Doctrine of the Church would have it that the Son is not *βουλή*, but *φύσις*, although not *ἀβουλία*. Comp. Nitzsch, *Dogmengeschichte*, I. pp. 219, 227. Moreover, he calls the Essence of God or God One absolute Personality. But this Personality is really, in his view, the Father; He is identical with the divine Essence. For Personality is, in his view, God apart from the Trinity, but God becomes trinitarian by the will of the Father. In this theory he has not even cared for the unity of God, but, as has been previously shown, he inclines to Tritheism. But if thought is to be bestowed upon the fact that Son and Spirit are, according to Thomasius, without Aseity, seeing that he restricts this to the Father, and that they are constituted by the will of the Father, we logically have merely creaturely beings in Son and Spirit, and therefore no Trinity. I give prominence to this, because not a few others now incline to Subordinationism, an untenable halting-place which hinders advance to a clear trinitarian doctrine. We are now, it would seem, recapitulating the position of the third century relatively to the Trinity. A *fermentum cognitionis* may lie in the question, whether *persona* can have the same meaning in its application to the Hypostases as such and to the One absolute Personality; whether the divine Unity is to be thought merely as a moral or a physical generic unity of three Persons, or as itself personally existent in them and by their means.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. my *Gesch. d. Christol.* I. 388, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The canon of the Dogmatic Theologians: *Opera ad intra sunt divisa*, does not mean that the Hypostases are separate, for they have a *παραχώρησις* and are correlates which cannot be thought apart from each other; but each is notwithstanding something different of itself, for were they identical, there would be no *παραχώρησις*. The second formula: *Opera ad extra sunt communia, indivisa*, would, on the contrary, establish that the economy of salvation rests upon the will of the whole Godhead in all His Hypostases, and not that all *opera ad extra* have like contents. The *ordo* of the Hypostases remains inviolate.

### GOD AT THE DOCTRINE OF ATTRIBUTES, AND CONCLUSION OF THAT DOCTRINE.

After mounting upwards at the inducement or stimulus of experience, and coming to a series of minute definitions of the concept of God, but without surveying their universal correlation and their coherence with the unity of the living idea of God, the task still remains of looking backwards from the supreme Unity attained, and testing whether it will approve itself the bond of the plurality of the divine Attributes. From the physical attributes we rose to the intellectual, and thence to the ethical. By means of all the so-called proofs for the existence of God, which rather constituted themselves for us into elements of one continuous course of proof, the thought of the Ontological Argument developed ever new turns, since it guaranteed the objective truth or the existence of what must be necessarily thought, and of what must be necessarily adjusted to the idea of the Absolute. But we only found the absolute point of repose in the ethical definition of God, because only in the necessary thought of the absolute Good, of that which is in itself absolutely worthy, does the inquiry find its limits; this is the question why God necessarily exists as *causa sui*, as absolute Beauty or as Intelligence. The end of Ontology is absolute Teleology. We then learnt that the real primary ethical Being is more minutely described by means of the trinitarian idea of God required by the Christian revelation as *Love*. Love is the supreme, the only adequate definition of the Essence of God, or definition of God, if it is rightly thought, namely, if it is thought as that unity of the ethically necessary and the free which is at the same time the principle of self-preservation and self-communication.

From this point we must now glance backwards at the divine attributes, which will appear in a new light and in a new connection. For they will all appear in a close unity, as necessarily verified and guaranteed by the absolutely supreme instance, since we shall succeed in regarding these attributes as determinations, which God as personal Love necessarily and eternally has and wills for the eternal Self-production of His own absolute ethical Personality. The Scriptures ascribe the highest dignity to love. They never call God Omnipotence, Immensity, etc., but they do say *θεός*

ἀγάπη.<sup>1</sup> And if God is also of course called Truth,<sup>2</sup> or Life,<sup>3</sup> by those words, as by φῶς, ethical being is meant as the true being. Schleiermacher, otherwise inclined to regard the divine attributes as distinct in our thought only, says for all that of love at the end of his *Glaubenslehre*, "God is love." Love is the centre, or the heart of God—God, in the Godhead, in such a way indeed that it holds the principles of all the divine perfections united in itself. Love is the absolutely worthy good, according to which all other worthy things measure themselves in harmony with their right to existence. Within or without God nothing is absolutely verified to be necessary, unless it is guaranteed or demanded by the love of God, and has its teleological verification thereby. Thomasius,<sup>4</sup> it is true, challenges this high and central position of love.<sup>5</sup> It is not, he says, the adequate description of the divine Essence; the other attributes are not mere *modi* of love; it is not to be supposed equivalent to the absolute Personality, that Personality is the presupposition of love. The holiness of God is not, he asserts, a mere *modus* of love, "of Self-communication or Self-surrender; the holy justice of God is something of itself, otherwise ἀποκατάστασις would follow." In these positions it is evident that Thomasius only conceives love to be self-communication or self-surrender to another, but he has not recognised self-preservation as also pertaining to it. But this would be only a physical and non-ethical goodness, because it would not be master of itself. But justice or self-preservation so largely pertains to love that it is itself a kind of love, namely, God's love for Himself. Further, the divine Justice is perfectly consistent with communication, because God may even communicate what He protects in His Self-preservation, so that both acts are permanently united in God and yet distinct. It may not, *of course*, be said that *Love is itself immediately all the other attributes*, and that they

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxi. 5; Jer. x. 10, xxxiii. 6; Deut. xxxii. 4; comp. 1 John v. 20; John xiv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> John i. 4, v. 14-29.

<sup>4</sup> *Lehre von Christi Person und Amt*. 2d ed. I. p. 174. Comp. Lange, *Positive Dogmatik*, p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> Which even Sartorius, Liebner, and others, nay, Schleiermacher himself, (II. p. 519) require.

are to be thought as *modi* of love only, or as submerged in love; that would be identification, and would make the objective distinction of the attributes a merely subjective distinction—a view previously refuted (§ 16). But neither is love a blossom of the other attributes, physical and logical; the highest is not the product of the lower, but—and this is the teleological aspect of the matter—*everything exists in God for love*. God, who as the unity of Self-preservation and of the will to communicate Himself is Love, wills Himself in all His attributes, as love requires and by virtue of love, for love is absolutely true being, the adequate form of the existence of the absolute Spirit. Within holy Love as the supreme unity, *Justice*, in the first place, is included. We must also, of course, say of justice that it is *its own end*, is absolutely worthy in itself (§ 29), but only because it fences and guards what is positively good, positive and universal ends, just as it pronounces their absolute worth, and because it is a part of goodness to maintain and defend good. We do not thus assert two absolute ends in themselves, two absolute points of unity, in God. Rather does justice, according to our description of the essence of love, belong so largely to the pure idea of love, that self-communication without justice, *i.e.* without self-preservation, would be mere eudæmonistic or physically coloured goodness, would be self-less profusion or emanation. Justice, that divine Self-preservation in the midst of everything which distinguishes God from the extra-divine, is only the negative side of love. The love of God is essentially holy; it desires and preserves the ethically necessary or holy, which God is.—*God's Self-love is as essential a feature of His love as His communicability*. Thence a series of fruitful positions follows. By virtue of His necessary Self-preservation, which is at the same time His holy Self-love, *there can be in God no activity of love to the detriment of His Self-preservation*. Justice is eternally secured in the divine Love.—*God can never sacrifice what is holy*, what is ethically necessary, for the sake of approving His love, whether by communication or participation or pardon. For the ethically necessary is the basis in the triune God which may never be shaken. Further, since God must as the ethical God remain like or true to Himself, even in His Self-approving, in willing anything ethical outside of Himself He



wills a portrayal of His ethical Trinity, of the ethically necessary, of the free, and of their union. This follows from His Justice or Self-preservation even.<sup>1</sup> He accordingly gives to everything its own (*sum cuique*), and therefore regards the free as free; and thus the regulation for the divine communication is supposed, that it should not impart itself to the creature in a manner injurious to freedom, in a physical process, by force or by magic. Finally, if the love of God experiences a check because of creaturely freedom, and the creature, instead of being centred in God, opposes a voluntary being to the law of God or to the ethically necessary, the divine Love is again Self-love, which must maintain its holy necessity and become *punitive justice*. The just inclemency, or in Scripture phrase the anger of God, is not directed at sin, but at the sinner as a sinner; it is a relation of a person to a person; it is not an act of loving communication, but primarily a sisting of love, although, according to the logic of the divine Love, a possible method of healing and of preparing the susceptibility for the return of communication (comp. pp. 299, etc.).

Whilst, then, Justice belongs to the pure and perfect idea of Love, the other attributes, the *intellectual* and *physical*, are on the other hand related to love, which is eternally living and is eternally born anew in the heart of God, as presuppositions or means. As presuppositions they are not so related as if they had the absolutely sufficient ground of their necessity even apart from love and in themselves, or as if, regarded from the highest point of view, they were co-ordinate with love in God, or as if love were their product. Not life nor power, nor even knowledge, is an absolute end in itself, but only goodness. They therefore exist *for* love, as means thereto as the absolute end, and only find in love their absolute necessity or verification; they are willed by the eternally perfected and yet eternally self-renewing divine Love as the means for its eternal Self-production, and if a world exists, for the approving of love. They have in love, as their highest *causa finalis*, so also the norm of their working. Thus, as far as the *logical* attributes are concerned, the dignity we must attribute to love, consists very well with the other fact, that of course without *self-con-*

<sup>1</sup> Therefore the Scriptures, and especially Isaiah, can derive the divine declaration in creation for what is ethically good from the divine Justice; see pp. 322, etc.

*scious Intelligence* (as Life), even Love would not be possible. Of course also not without absolute Personality, but this, thought apart from love, would be of a merely intellectual kind, not the absolutely highest. *Knowledge does not exist in God for its own sake*, whilst love is an absolute end in itself. Indeed, knowledge only perfects itself in God by means of love. For knowledge is only complete as wisdom, and wisdom does not exist apart from the idea of absolute ends. Since love alone embraces and reaches this idea, the divine Essence attains its eternal perfection solely in love.<sup>1</sup>

If we turn to the *physical* attributes, we must distinguish between those of a formal kind, such as Beauty and Harmony, and those which are material real potencies, such as Infinity of Being, absolute Life, Fulness of power, Omnipotence. First a word upon the latter. If they are also to be placed in the light of the divine Love, it is of great importance that they be thought in their working or in their actual being to be *dependent* upon love, but not that God or the divine activity be allowed to be necessitated by them. It is accordingly to be taught from the standpoint of love that there is in God no physical or logical necessity governing Him, perchance imposed upon Him by His Infinity, to be exclusively all being, all reality and power; it is only to be thought because of the Solity established in His Aseity that He, the almighty Love, is alone and immutably the absolute ground of the possibility of everything which is. There is, further, no necessity in Him, not even because of His Infinity, to be everywhere the same, to will and to work on His side everywhere and always only the same. Rather, if His love so desires, is a system possible of diverse revelations and modes of the divine Being in the world, and even the solity of His efficient Being in one revelation, such as Christendom believes to exist in Christ, who, because God is in Him in unique fashion, occupies a unique and central position in the universe. As far as God's *Might* or *Omnipotence* is concerned, there is in God no dark,

<sup>1</sup> Upon the teleological treatment, which must not merely be a matter of perception (as Herbart would have it), but ontological and metaphysical, Trendelenburg especially expresses himself in an instructive manner: *Hist. Beitr. z. Philos.* II. pp. 343-351; his *Logische Untersuchungen*, II. p. 1, etc. Comp. Lotze, II. B. iv. cap. i. etc., vi. cap. v.

irresistible, or necessary force, and not for a moment a superabundance, urged of itself or independently to realization, so that God, to will an ordered world, must restrain or limit it; God's infinite fulness of life is illuminated and controlled by the might of His own love. Nor is God naked spirit, but His absolute life, the infinite pleroma of His power, is the material, as it were, in which He rules as love. As love, God desires the existence of this fulness of life, desires this empire of vital forces, in order that He may be the perfect magnificence of love, love in substantial realization. Thus, then, love desires again for its own sake and of itself the fulness of might of being and life, just as it desires the power to do what it, love, wills. This *Omnipotence* is one conditioned by love, and the law of love which wisdom utters. It by no means has an existence of itself or has its own law, *e.g.* that it must of necessity work what as power it is able to; but it is to be taught that the love of God *can* do what it wills. Even here the fact repeats itself, that the physical attribute of power and of perfect power only finds its completion by means of love, for to the full idea of power, freedom, self-mastery belongs. Hence it follows with regard to the relation of the divine Omnipotence to human freedom, that it is quite unjustifiable to think of an Omnipotence which necessitates God, and which must alone and exclusively retain all efficiency of work. Yet only so false a representation of Omnipotence would bring the latter into collision with the freedom of personal spirits. The divine Omnipotence *cannot* come into collision with love, because it does not stand at all opposed to love as an independent power. If Love requires fresh beings, Omnipotence cannot hinder nor become injured thereby, for it only exists for the will of love, of course not merely for its communicating will, but also for its just self-preservation. In His love God is the power over His Omnipotence. Because God need not work everything which is in itself possible to His power, and which His knowledge knows to be possible, it cannot, finally, be said that everything comprised in the knowledge of God must also be comprised in the working of His Omnipotence. His knowledge is wider than His action; He does not do everything possible which He knows; nor by dint of His action does He do or know everything to be realized He knows.

*Observation.*—But it is of special importance to consider the divine Immutability in the light of the divine Love. The former is a very important idea for religion, the basis of faith as confidence in God, and therefore infinitely often made conspicuous in the Old Testament,<sup>1</sup> especially in contrast with Heathenism. But on the other hand, it is equally important for religion, that God should occupy a *very living* relation to the world, and should accredit Himself as the living God, who is not excluded from the developing and mutable world, but who without Self-detriment participates in the world in spite of its subjection to time and space. If, then, Deism transforms the divine Immutability into pure Transcendence and remoteness from the world, and if Heathenism and Pantheism exalt the living Immanence even to the endangering of the divine Immutability and to the divine Self-detriment, whilst religion equally needs and wishes both truths, the divine Self-identity and Transcendence equally with the divine Vitality and Immanence in the world; where shall we find the right measure for the Immutability as well as for the living presence of God, or rather, how shall we reconcile them both? The satisfactory dogmatic formula will only be found in that which permits both, the divine Immutability and Vitality, to be so regarded as one, that God may be living just by virtue of the very fact which gives Him His inviolable Immutability, and conversely. *And this fact is given in the ethical idea of God peculiar to Christianity, in the correct idea of love.* For, since justice is one side of love, God is referred to Himself even in Self-communication; God does not lose but maintains and affirms Himself in all His actions, and conversely even in His Self-preservation He not merely asserts Himself as the Holy One, but as Self-communicative. God has His Immutability absolutely in His ethical Essence, from which He cannot and will not fall away.<sup>2</sup> But this Immutability certainly does not exclude, it includes, motion, life, nay, historically regarded, a changing action and relation of God to the changing world. In order to preserve His ethical Self-identity, God cannot be indifferent to history and its changes occurring in space and time, but He remains Self-identical in His participation in the world, in its life, activity, and passivity, because He assumes a relation to it proportioned to its varying phases, *i.e.* He assumes diverse relations. There is a divine participation concomitant with the course of the world. To retain ethical Self-identity, God must occupy a position at every moment corresponding to the constitution

<sup>1</sup> Pa. lxii. 8, xviii. 2, xxi. 7, xlii. 11, lxxi. 3; 2 Sam. xxii. 2; Isa. xvii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Jas. i. 13, 14; 2 Tim. ii. 13.

of mankind, and thus a diverse relation at different times to the same men, and at the same time to different men. Supposing a free world, God cannot regard the development of evil as if it were good, and conversely. But to straightway maintain His ethical and true Immutability, He must enter into space and time by His participation, with power of control over them, and there must be something of mutability in the divine Thought and Volition, in short, in His living relation to the world (comp. pp. 329, etc.). If God did not change His thought and action in reference to men when *they* changed, an exceptionable mutability would then be directly supposed in God; He would not remain *internally* Self-identical. He would not be ethically immutable. In order therefore that God may maintain His ethical identity, that is, may be just, He cannot regard the unequal as equal, but must, in order to maintain Himself unchanged in the ethical energy of His Essence which repels evil, of course change His historical thought and knowledge, volition and action, *i.e.* to say, His mind and will in their relation to the world. We say, therefore, that there is no Immutability of the divine Essence and Life, which can hinder the movement of God's holy love, because in the last resort the divine Immutability rests upon God's ethical Essence, which is at once the principle of His Self-preservation and of His movement or of the guarantee of His living relation to the world. Neither time and space with their contents nor the divine Nature can put limits to God's ethical Self-identity, which is also a living state. But His ethical Essence bears within itself His inviolable holy law, and asserts His Self-identity, not by a uniform and eternally similar activity in reference to the changing world, but by an activity which is dissimilar and which accommodates itself to the necessity of the moment. Otherwise the relation between God and the world would simply be a lifeless and deistic one, which would rapidly lead back to Deism (comp. pp. 341, 369, 370). Accordingly, passages which have a strongly anthropopathical sound, have notwithstanding an objective and real ground.<sup>1</sup> If mention is made of repentance in God, it certainly does not mean the wish that He had not so acted,—“God is not a man that He should repent,”<sup>2</sup>—but it means a change in the divine Volition by virtue of, and not in spite of, His ethical identity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxi. 3-6, xxxi. 20; Eph. iv. 30; Rom. viii. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29, 35.

<sup>3</sup> Thus such passages are to be understood as Gen. vi. 6; Amos vii. 3, 6; Jer. xxvi. 3, 19, iii. 13, 19, xlii. 10; 1 Sam. xv. 11; Ex. xxxii. 14; Jonah iv. 2, iii. 9, 10; Ezek. xxiv. 14; Joel ii. 13; Ps. cvi. 45, cx. 4; Rom. xi. 29; Heb. vii. 21.

No bulwark needs therefore be erected against what is anthropopathical by philosophy,—by ideas of Absoluteness, Simplicity, and Exaltation above space and time, per-adventure asserted by philosophy. Theology combats what is necessary by its own means, by its ethical idea of God.

5. The doctrine of a living relation of God to the world, which is not excluded by the ethical divine Immutability, but is rather conditioned and demanded thereby, is in very many aspects of the greatest importance for the life of piety. It is thus possible for God to enter actively into the present condition of mankind just as He always is, and therefore, without detriment to His absolute freedom, nay by virtue of it, to allow Himself to be conditioned in His action by the action of men. Thus, instead of the abstract lifeless theories which lead to absolute Deism or Predestinationism, there is possible a living history of the deeds of God, the *πολυποίκιλος σοφία θεοῦ*, which conditions Him with full regard to freedom and the plurality of creaturely acts, and without excluding the stability of the final end. Thus new divine acts are possible, like that of the revelation to Moses, like that in Christ and at Pentecost, indeed like that in the regeneration of every individual Christian, which permanently remain in firm eternal unity and conditionateness, equally because of the immutable internal Essence of the holy divine Love, and because of the purpose of those acts. Thus, too, room is left for the justification of the individual as a special act in time, as a salutation from the living God to the soul, which is more than the mere seizure by the common spirit of the Church, more than enlightenment upon the conditions of salvation and upon the universal and eternal divine inclination towards the forgiveness of sins, more even than a mere knowledge of the historical atonement of Christ or an eternal purpose of election. And thus, generally, room is left for a living special providence, for a regard which includes every creature just as it is. It is objective truth, if the pious man sees and knows in the eye and regard of God the paternal sympathy which fixes its eye upon and judges him as he is at the moment, and which does not stand over against him as a rigid and lifeless law; which rears him and cherishes him, and is not related to him now as ever, and ever as now. How important

this is for the work of atonement also is easily seen. For since it is not merely the relation of the world to God which has a history, but also the relation of God to the world (as of a Person to persons), it is possible to see in the objective atonement by Christ not simply a change in the relation of the world to God, but also in the relation of God to the world, so that the world, since Christ actually belongs to it, has not the same value to God which it had before Christ came, but the realization of the atonement for the world by Christ has a value to God which it did not actually have before Christ. And actual piety desires before everything a living relation to God; not merely such acts as He has ever done to the individual, but a present living intercourse between God and man, a living relation of reciprocity, a colloquy of asking and giving, of questioning and reply, according to the needs of every moment and by the agency of acts which have not always been performed by God just in the same way. For an actual hearing of prayer, as Rothe rightly asserted, room is only left, if God, without detriment to, nay, by virtue of, His ethical Self-identity which is the supreme power in God, allows Himself to be conditioned by the constitution of the world, and even by the creature who invokes Him.

6. In this love of His, finally, God is the **ALL-SUFFICIENT** and the **BLESSED**. This leads us still nearer to the relation of the ethical concept of God to the physical definitions of a formal kind. The divine *Blessedness* is the harmony and beauty of the divine Life and the eternal perception of the same, which is eternal without defect and without a superabundance in itself, and into the holy places of which no disturbance and no endurance find their way. It is again the holy Love, which possesses its absolute life in eternal harmony and safety, and transfigures it into the blessedness of the purest Self-content. The eternal Sabbath God keeps is the enjoyment of His eternal Self-contented life, which is free from hindrances and unrest, and also from daily hardship, is free from egoistic Self-centring as it is from unstable movement. The categories of measure, beauty, and harmony came up earlier in our discussion, but still under a finite character and not in their truth. They attain their internal

infinitude and truth in alliance with holy Love, being thereby transformed in the Self-conscious God into Blessedness, since love is absolute freedom and life, and, as the harmonizing principle, eternally transfigures its nature into ideal and real majesty. Beauty and harmony are everywhere the perfect form and realization of the ethical; and the self-conscious and self-enjoying harmony of the ethical is Blessedness. Thus if the ethical belongs to the rhythm of the divine life, to its blessedness, and if God is blessed in His love, blessedness is manifestly not to be thought as sheer rest or motionless and perfected being, but as harmonious activity. It might be thought that the transition to the world was already made by such a conclusion. But this would imply that God will be or is blessed only by means of His eternal creation. Certainly God is blessed in thinking and constituting the world. But He cannot first be blessed, because He wills and forms something distinct from Himself. Further, He does not become love because He wills a world, but He must be love before all things, love which wills to be itself holy and communicative and is blessed in itself. Only thus can God will a world without being dependent upon a world. Thus, then, the transition from God to the world certainly seems excluded by the Self-contented blessedness of His love, or by His *all-sufficiency*. But possibly it is evident that this All-sufficiency, in which the ethical concept of God closes, is the point at which we stand nearest to a creation of the world.

*Observation.*—Nor may the divine Blessedness be so thought that it is incapable of any change in its relation to the world by the divine participation in the world. On the contrary, there must be in God, if He is Freedom, the realization of love in the free world; and therefore the sacrifice which creaturely love presents to Him must also be a pleasure and a joy, just as there must also be in Him a sympathetic feeling as well as just displeasure in reference to sin and the scorning of His love (Eph. iv. 30). But this living relation, this *φιλανθρωπία* (Tit. iii. 4) of His, which reflects variations from the world without Him upon the world within Him, rests eternally upon the immutable ground of His Holy Self-love, which is for Him at the same time the eternal source of His inexhaustible Blessedness in Himself. It rests, further, upon the wider ground of the activity or participation of His love, and is therefore not passivity, although it of course



includes receptivity for the perception of free forces and their states, to be accurately distinguished from passivity. Joy, grief, anger, sympathy, and pity must be by no means divested of all that is anthropomorphic, but everything which the deepest and most intimate, as well as the purest participation in the life, passion, and action of the world requires and puts into movement, must have a place in God, and only what is impure or weak is to be rejected. The main point as regards the divine idea is this, that all these movements of pity or anger do not have their origin in the physical essence—in the nature—of God, do not receive their impulse thence, and thus condition and influence His ethical Essence, but the receptivity of His nature for everything homogeneous therewith is purely ministered by the energy of His holy love.



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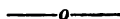
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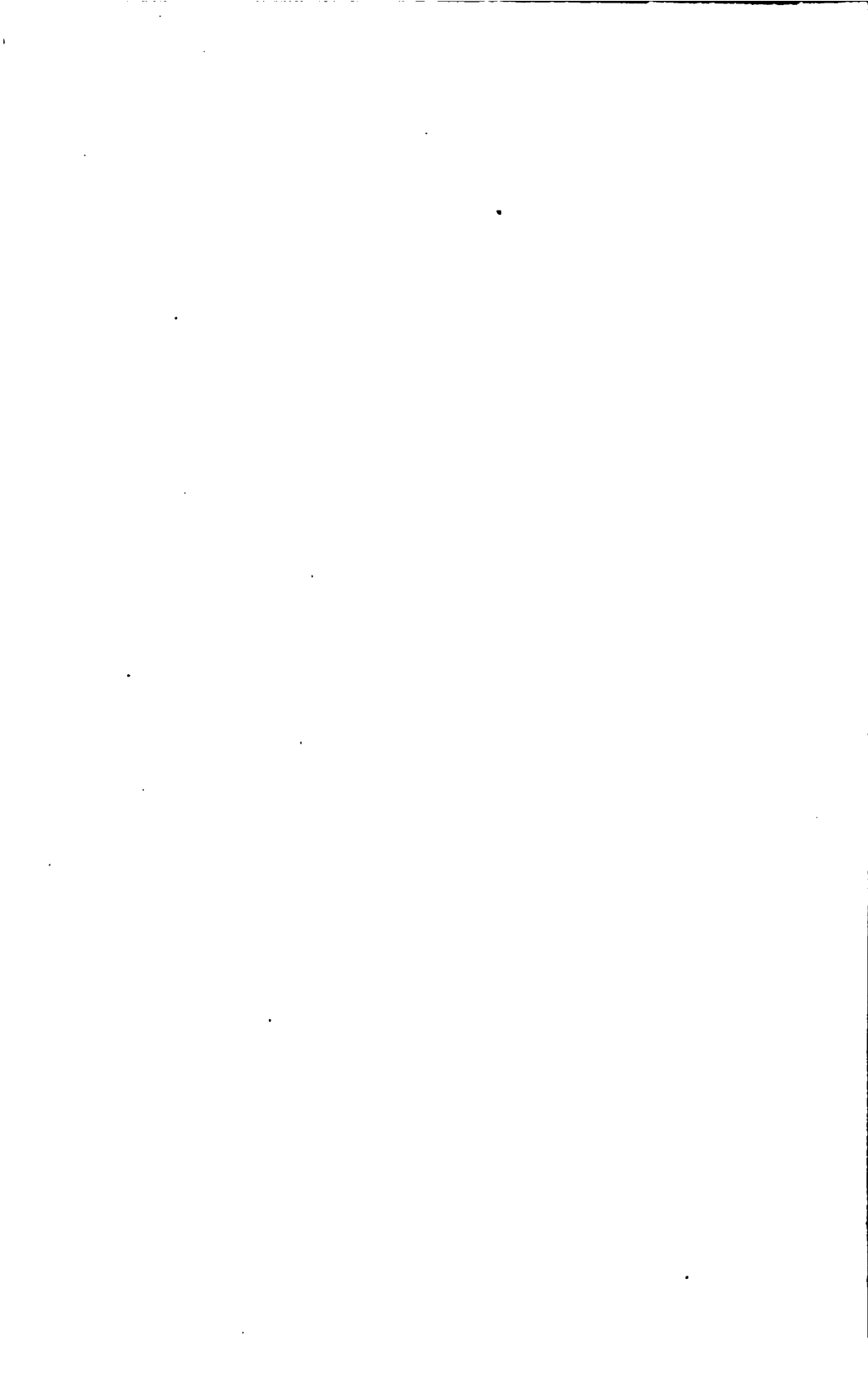
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